BEFORE THE BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

BOARD MEETING )
DECEMBER 11, 2020 )

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS - VIA ZOOM

December 11, 2020 9:00 a.m.

BEFORE CHAIR CHRIS DEVENY, BOARD MEMBERS JOHN DEARMENT, CHRIS TWEETEN, DEXTER BUSBY, JEREMIAH LYNCH and DAVID LEHNHERR

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WHEREUPON, the following proceedings were had and testimony taken, to-wit:

CHAIR DEVENY: I'm going to go ahead and get started. Welcome, everybody. And I'm getting some feedback, so I'd please ask people to please mute, especially their phones, if people are on phones. Thank you.

I'm Chris Deveny. I'm Chair of the
Board of Environmental Review, and I'll call this meeting to order. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, we are holding this meeting virtually using the Zoom meeting platform. And with that, I'll turn it over to Joyce to do the roll call, please.

And again, we're getting horrible feedback and noise. If people could please mute phones and your Zoom. Go ahead, Joyce.

MS. WITTENBERG: Chairperson Deveny.
CHAIR DEVENY: Present.
MS. WITTENBERG: Dexter Busby.
BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: Here.
MS. WITTENBERG: Hillary Hanson.
(No response)
MS. WITTENBERG: We expect her to be absent today. John DeArment.

BOARD MEMBER DeARMENT: Here.
MS. WITTENBERG: Chris Tweeten.
BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: Present.
MS. WITTENBERG: Jerry Lynch.
BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Here.
MS. WITTENBERG: And David, I apologize if $I$ mess $u p$ your last name. David Lehnherr.

BOARD MEMBER LEHNHERR: That's fine.
Here.
MS. WITTENBERG: Okay. So we have six. We have a quorum.

CHAIR DEVENY: Okay. Great. Thank you, Joyce. I'd like to introduce Joyce Wittenberg who is helping us out with all the technology today, and doing a lot of the meetings, administrative preparation for us, and thank you, Joyce.

So with that, let's go ahead and have a roll call or introduction from $D E Q$; and then after that, $I$ 'm going to ask Joyce to go through all of the public members who have indicated that they're on line and probably wish to speak later. So go ahead with DEQ.

Again, there's somebody who hasn't muted, and if they could do that, I would really appreciate it. I don't know if anyone else is
getting that feedback, but it's pretty distractive.

MS. CLERGET: If you're not speaking or not a Board member, could you please turn off your video, because that will help everybody's feed. It takes a lot of bandwidth when everybody leaves their video on. Thank you.

MS. WITTENBERG: And for those that are on a phone, it's my understanding if you press star six, it will mute you.

MR. MATHIEUS: So Madam Chair, for ease sake, we just thought that I'd go through the list of DEQ employees are on. I've got a list sitting right here, if you're okay with that.

CHAIR DEVENY: Okay. And just so that, because we are on $Z o o m$ and on the phone, please everybody introduce yourself before you speak. So that was George Mathieus with DEQ speaking up, so go ahead, George. Thank you.

MR. MATHIEUS: Great, Madam Chair.
Again, George Mathieus, DEQ Deputy Director. So from the Water Quality Division we have Tim Davis, Galen Steffen, Jon Kenning, Myla Kelly, Lauren Sullivan, Mike Suplee, Director McGrath.

From the Air Quality Bureau, we have Liz Ulrich, Julie Merkel, Troy Burrows, Dave Klemp. From our Coal and Opencut Program, I see we have Ed Coleman. And our attorney staff that are present, Kirsten Bowers, Ed Hayes, Norm Mullen, Mark Lucas, Sarah Christopherson, Kurt Moser, Angie Colamaria. I think that's everybody, Madam Chair.

CHAIR DEVENY: Okay. Great. And we also have our Board attorney Sarah Clerget with us today. Thank you, Sarah. So Joyce, go ahead, and I'll turn it over to you to have the public introductions.

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: This is Board Member Lynch. I'm still getting a lot of feedback.

CHAIR DEVENY: Yes. I am, too. I don't know what to do about it other than to ask people to be polite with their technology.

MR. MATHIEUS: Madam Chair, this is George Mathieus. It looks like the feedback is coming from a phone that ends in 770 .

CHAIR DEVENY: That's helpful.
MR. MATHIEUS: There it goes. Thank you.

CHAIR DEVENY: Thank you. Go ahead,

Joyce.
MS. WITTENBERG: So I'm going to call on the phone numbers. When $I$ call out the last three digits of your phone number, please identify yourself, who you're affiliated with, if you plan to comment on anything today, and what it is, and whether you're a proponent or opponent. 770.
(No response)
MS. WITTENBERG: Of course you'll have to unmute yourself to talk.
(No response)
MS. WITTENBERG: 770.
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Why don't you go ahead, Joyce. We'll come back to that at the end then. MS. WITTENBERG: Okay. 408 .
(No response)
MS. WITTENBERG: Phone number ending in 408, could you identify yourself, please.
(No response)
MS. WITTENBERG: How about phone number ending in 941, could you identify yourself.

MR. DOLPHAY: Matthew Dolphay, Holland and Hart. I don't plan on making any comment.

MS. WITTENBERG: One more time, phone
number ending in 408 .
(No response)
MS. WITTENBERG: Phone number ending in 770.
(No response)
MS. WITTENBERG: Phone number ending in 517.

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: This is Dexter.
MS. WITTENBERG: Okay.
CHAIR DEVENY: I think go ahead on and move to the chat, I think, Joyce.

MS. WITTENBERG: Do you want them called out from the chat?

CHAIR DEVENY: Yes. I believe that's the procedure that you guys talked about doing; is that correct, Sarah and George?

MS. WITTENBERG: So let me get up here. We have Christopher Servheen. Do you need me to tell you if he's going to talk or all that?

MR. SERVHEEN: Yes. This is Christopher Servheen. I'm with the Montana Wildlife Federation, and I wish to testify. I'm a proponent of the regulations.

MS. WITTENBERG: Joyce, we don't have to have everybody speak for themselves. You can just
read it off of the chat list, and then at the end we'll ask if you've missed anybody.

CHAIR DEVENY: Somebody needs to mute, please.

MS. WITTENBERG: William Geer, he will be making a statement as a proponent.

MR. GEER: Yes, I will.
MS. WITTENBERG: John Kilpatrick with the USGS, he would like to make a comment on the selenium rulemaking on behalf of the US Geological Survey, neither proponent or opponent.

Gregory Hoffman would like to make a comment as a proponent. Genny Hoyle would like to make a comment on the selenium rulemaking on behalf of the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho as a proponent. Scott Spaulding, USFS, no public comment. Michael Jamison, National Parks Conservation Association. Jim Vashro from Kalispell. Gary Aitken, Jr., Chairman of the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, proponent, and would like to speak. Jim, Flathead Wildiffe, Inc. David -MS. CLERGET: Could we get a last name? Sorry to interrupt, Joyce. Jim, what is your last name?

MR. VASHRO: Sorry. I got the chat a
little wrong. It's Jim Vashro with Flathead Wildiffe in Kalispell, and I'm a proponent.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you.
MS. WITTENBERG: Dave Hadden, a
proponent of the rule. He represents Headwaters Montana, a regional conservation organization. Colby Blair would like to comment on the selenium rule on behalf of the Last Resort Outfitters as a proponent. I think this is Jim again, so we'll skip that.

Rodney Lance Veolia, Great Falls, no comment. William Geer, speaking as a proponent from Montana Wildife Federation, and Hellgate Hunters and Anglers. David Kassarah (phonetic), environmental engineer, Westmoreland Resources, no comments. Gregory Hoffman, US Army Corps of Engineers, Koocanusa standard, proponent. Opportunity to comment appreciated.

Trevor Selch, Montana FWP, would like to make comment in favor of adopting site specific criteria for Lake Koocanusa and the Kootenai River. Shelly Fyant, Chairwoman, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, comment as proponent.

Chris Servheen, Montana Wildlife Federation, would like to comment as a proponent
for the selenium regulations. Ayn Schmit, US Environmental Protection Agency would like to comment in support of the proposed selenium criteria. Michael Jamison, National Parks Conservation Association, would like to comment as a proponent of the rule.

Lars Sander-Green, WildSight, would like to comment as a proponent for the selenium rule. Garrett Visser, Idaho Wildlife Federation, he would like to comment as proponent on proposed selenium rule. Eddie Petroschen (phonetic) would like to comment as a proponent of the selenium rule.

Vicki Marquis with Holland and Hart representing $T e c k$ as an opponent to the proposed selenium rule, and will be offering comment on that agenda item. Anne Fairbrother, Exponent, Inc. would like to comment on the selenium rule as an opponent. Sue Ireland, Fish Wildlife Department Director, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, would like to make comment on the selenium rule on behalf of the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho as a proponent.

David Blackburn, Kootenai Angler, proponent, would like to comment. Michael Ryan

Aylward, British Columbia Environment, observing only. Lars Sander-Green is also aware of a few others who will be joining to make a comment as proponents of the selenium rule, but they're not here yet. I believe we will ask again before we take comment on that item.

Jill Weitz, proponent, representing Salmon Beyond Borders, from Juneau, Alaska would like to comment. Jim Vashro, that's Jim again. Dr. Rachel Malison, Researcher and Program Manager of Monitoring Montana Waters at Flathead Lake Biological Station, proponent, would like to comment.
Brad Smith, Idaho Conservation League, would like to comment as a proponent of the selenium rules. Alec Underwood, Montana Wildife Federation, proponent, no public comment. Duncan Stewart, Embassy of Canada, no comments. David Brooks, Montana Trout Unlimited, proponent, and would like to comment.

Bob Steed, Idaho DEQ, Quarterly and Regional Office, no testimony, but can answer any questions related to Idaho criteria. Clayton Elliott, Montana Trout Unlimited, proponent for proposed site specific selenium standard rule
final adoption.
Vicki Marquis with Holland and Hart, this time representing the City of Great Falls, will be available to answer questions and comment on the stipulation for consideration by the Board as an action item III(C) (1) on the agenda today.

Erin Sexton would like to make comment as a proponent on the selenium standard. Lars Sander-Green who commented he's aware of others who want to comment as proponents on the selenium rule and has listed them. Do you want me to call out those names? They're not here yet.

CHAIR DEVENY: Let's do that later.
MS. WITTENBERG: Peggy Trank, Treasure State Resources Association, no comments. Clayton Elliott, skip that. Randal McNair, WildSight, would also like to comment as a proponent for the selenium criteria. Chairwoman Shelly fyant on behalf of Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes will make comments; and Stu Levit will make comments on behalf of the Tribes as well, both as proponents.

Randal McNair, Fernie, British Columbia, WildSight Conservation coordinator for the Elk Valley, proponent of the proposed selenium
standard. Ellie Hudson Heck, Idaho Conservation League, will not be commenting.

Dave Hadden would like to make comment. Tonya Fish, EPA, no comment. Travis Meyers, CDM Smith, here for Great Falls permit appeal, no public comment. Kristen Boyd, Wildife Biologist, member of public, proponent of regulations, no comment. And she said that privately. I'm going to copy that and put that in there, everyone, so that we have that on the record. And that is it. CHAIR DEVENY: Okay. Thank you, Joyce. And $I$ appreciate everyone's patience with doing this. I know that the zoom technology enables us to move forward, but it is a little bit awkward, isn't it? Okay.

With that, we're going to move on to the administrative items on our agenda today. We have four sets of minutes to review and decide if we approve with, so we'll take those one at a time. First of all, the October 9th, 2020 meeting minutes. Board members, do you have any comments or corrections to that?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing and seeing none, is there any public comment on those meeting
minutes?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing and seeing none, is there a motion on those minutes?

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: This is Board Member Lynch. I'll move to approve those minutes.

CHAIR DEVENY: It's moved. I'll second it. Thank you. All those Board members in favor, please signify by saying aye.
(Response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Any opposed?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, the October 9th meeting minutes are approved.

Let's move on to the August 7 th meeting minutes. We had asked those to be revised a little bit, and they have been. Are there any additions or corrections to the August 7 th minutes?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Any public comments on the August 7 th minutes?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: I will move that we
approve the August 7 th minutes. Is there a
second?
BOARD MEMBER DeARMENT: This is John. I'll second it.

CHAIR DEVENY: Seconded by John
DeArment. All those in favor of the motion to approve the August 7 th minutes, please signify by saying aye.
(Response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Any opposed?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, the August 7 th minutes are approved.

We have minutes from the special meeting that we held on September 24 th. Are there any additions or corrections to those minutes by Board members?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, any from DEQ or the public?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, would someone make a motion on those.

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Board Member Lynch
again. I'll move to approve those minutes.

> CHAIR DEVENY: All right. And I'll
second those. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.
(Response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Any opposed?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, the
September 24 th meeting minutes are approved.
And the last set is from our special meeting on October $29 t h$. Any Board members have additions or corrections to those minutes?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Seeing none, is there any public comment or DEQ corrections or additions?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing and seeing none, I would move to approve the October 29 th minutes. Could I have a second.

BOARD MEMBER LEHNHERR: Madam Chair, this is David Lehnherr. I'll second those.

CHAIR DEVENY: It's been moved and seconded. All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.
(Response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Any opposed?
(No response)

CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, those meeting minutes are also approved. Okay.

So the next is a little housekeeping thing for next year. Usually in December the Board of Environmental Review sets the meeting schedule for the following year, and those are based on certain requirements for meeting schedules with Secretary of State filing, and those dates are before you as February 12 th, April $16 t h$, June 11 th, August $13 t h$, October $8 t h$, and December 10 th. Generally they're the second, I believe the second Friday of the month. It varies a little bit.

Is there any Board discussion on these dates or a motion to use those dates as our schedule?

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: This is Board Member Lynch. I'll move to approve the dates.

CHAIR DEVENY: It's been moved. Is there a second?

BOARD MEMBER DeARMENT: This is John DeArment. I'll second that.

CHAIR DEVENY: It's been moved and seconded that the dates set forth in our Board packet will be set for the schedule for the BER
meetings for 2021. Is there any public comment on that?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, all those in favor, signify by saying aye.
(Response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Any opposed?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, the schedule is set.

Let's move on then to the briefing items, and we'll turn to Sarah Clerget, our Board attorney, to walk us through those cases.

MS. CLERGET: Sure. Starting with your agenda item II(A) (1) (a), this is Copper Ridge, and this one, as you guys know, has been outstanding for awhile. This is my delinquency on getting this decision done.

Currently pending before me are motions for summary judgment, a motion to take judicial notice, and a motion to strike, and they are all fully briefed, and have been for a bit, and $I$ will get a decision out on them as soon as possible, certainly before the next meeting.

And there is a District Court case piece
of this as well, which was in Amy Christensen's memo, outside Counsel, in your Board packet. And Chris, $I$ understand you're going to update that as Amy is not here.

CHAIR DEVENY: Yes. I didn't think it was necessary for Amy to come since she was able to very concisely describe what's going on there.

But basically BER filed a motion to dismiss on the grounds that we should not have been named in the petition, and that motion has been fully briefed, and was argued on October 7 th, and is awaiting a decision in District Court now.

MS. CLERGET: Okay. And then moving on, this is (b), Duane Murry. I've issued a scheduling order on that case on October 6th of 2020. They're proceeding according to the scheduling order with discovery closing in March of 2021 .

Moving on to $2(a)$, this is Alpine Pacific Utilities. You guys took action on this, granted the stipulation and request for retention of Board jurisdiction. Alpine is to provide DEQ confirmation that the ambient groundwater monitoring has been installed no later than April $20 t h$ of 2021. And $I$ just wanted to let you guys
know, per Chris's request, that we will -- "we" meaning me and Aleisha, the Hearing Examiner -will keep track that has been done and update the Board when that happens.
(b) is Absaloka Mine. There is a joint motion for remand and suspension of proceedings that you granted on October $9 t h$, and then the final order was signed on November 16 th. The parties will file a joint status update to the Board no later than June 30 th, 2021 , so you guys will see that again at the meeting. It will continue to be on the agenda, but you'll see that update after it comes in.
(c) is Montanore Minerals. We had a hearing on this one. It got stayed as a parallel case went up to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court made the decision on that case, which was issued November 17 th. The parties have until December 17 th to file a joint status report, indicating how or if they wish to proceed with the contested case, given the Supreme Court's decision, which was to vacate the permit and remand it back to DEQ.
(d) is Spring Creek Coal. And there's an amended scheduling order that was issued May

12th of 2020. The parties are proceeding according to that, the discovery closing in January of 2021. They've also filed an amended notice in that case, so it's chugging along.
(e) is Signal Peak Energy. There was a District Court case on this that went up to the Supreme Court, and came back down, and was remanded back. So the contested case proceeding has been going along while that Supreme Court appeal was pending, so we've just continued through.

We did a hearing that was a four day trial on that. Proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law from the parties are due on December 18 th, with responses to those FOFCOLS due on February 5th of 2021 . Once those responses are in, then it's in front of me, and $I$ will issue proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law to the Board.
(f) is Rippling Woods. This is a consolidated, $I$ think there are fourteen different cases brought by homeowners in the Rippling Woods Subdivision.

DEQ filed a partial motion for summary judgment in this case. There was a response and
reply on November 4 th. We've set oral argument for that partial motion for summary judgment in January of 2021, at which point it will be ripe for a decision from me.
(g) is Western Energy, which we refer to as Western Energy Area F. There were substantial motions in that case. Westmoreland, who is the equivalent to -- Western Energy is the title of the case, but Westmoreland has taken over Western Energy's position, so when $I$ say Westmoreland in the description, they are essentially the Intervenor, the mine.

So they filed a partial motion for summary judgment, $D E Q$ filed a partial motion for summary judgment, and the Conservation Groups filed a partial motion for summary judgment. Westmoreland also filed a motion to dismiss.

I issued a decision on all of those motions on November 24 th. I denied Westmoreland's motion to dismiss. I denied the Conservation Groups' motion for partial summary judgment, and I granted Westmoreland and DEQ's motions for partial summary judgment, which means that out of the six original issues, only one issue remains for a hearing.

I had a status conference with the parties on December 4 th, and they could not agree to bring that decision before the Board. And as you all know, my position has been unless the parties agree to bring it in front of you essentially as an interlocutory, for lack of a better term, and if they don't agree, then it doesn't come. So this case will continue to a hearing on the one remaining issue, and then it will be before the Board in its entirety.
(h) is the AM3 appeal. That comes from the outside Counsel memo, Chris.

CHAIR DEVENY: Okay. So again, this was another case that we had assigned to Amy Christensen.

BER filed a petition for writ of supervisory control with the Supreme Court in May, and it was denied. The matter was remanded to the District Court for briefing. The petition was fully briefed, and oral argument is currently scheduled for December 16 th.

However, at the end of October the other Respondents in the case filed a joint motion to strike the exhibits that were attached to the Petitioner's reply brief, and they've asked the

Court to rule on that motion to strike before proceeding to the petition itself, and to convert that December $16 t h$ oral argument meeting to arguments on the motion to strike, but the Court has not yet ruled on this request, so we'll be hearing more of that later on at a future meeting. Go ahead, Sarah.

MS. CLERGET: Great. (i) is the Savko
matter. On November 25 th, 2020 , the parties requested a 60 day stay. They're working on settlement. I granted that on November 30 th. And by January 25 th, they will either file their stipulation for dismissal or a proposed schedule.
(j) is Signal Peak. We refer to this as the water rights permit to distinguish it from the other Signal Peak cases. They're working on settlement on this one, so it's stayed. On November 20 th, $I$ stayed it, and they will provide an update, either a stipulation for dismissal or a schedule on February 25 th of 2021.
(k) is the matter of Woodrock. They're also working on settling this one. It was an unopposed motion to stay on November 30 th, which $I$ granted, and they will have until January 29th, 2021 to file either that stipulation or a proposed
schedule.
And I think that's all from me. The last one is for DEQ.

CHAIR DEVENY: Okay. And can we call on Kirsten Bowers then to give us an update on the Western Energy Rosebud Mine case.

MS. BOWERS: Yes. Good morning, Madam Chair, members of the Board. As you know, that case has been before the Board for awhile, and has been stayed pending judicial review of the MPDES permit.

And that case has gone to the Montana Supreme Court. The Montana Supreme Court reversed the First Judicial District Court on decisions of law, and found that $D E Q$ properly interpreted its rule, which we call the ephemeral rule. It allows DEQ some flexibility to exempt ephemeral waters from the water quality standards that apply to Class C-3 waters without the Board reclassifying those waters.

And the Court also determined that DEQ lawfully permitted representative sampling of outfalls under Western Energy Company's MPDES permit.

The Montana Supreme Court remanded the
case back to the District Court for further proceedings to determine certain issues of material fact, specifically whether DEQ acted properly in regard to a stretch of Eastfork Armells Creek that is potentially impaired and intermittent, and whether it's necessary for $D E Q$ to adopt the TMDL for the impaired segment; and also whether the representative monitoring selected by $D E Q$ is factually supported in the record.

And then more recently, jurisdiction of the case was assumed by Judge Abbott, and DEQ and Westmoreland renewed a joint motion to stay the litigation until the earlier of DEQ's issuance of a renewal of the MPDES permit, which DEQ and Westmoreland believe will moot the litigation, or until June 1st, 2021. And that motion to stay is opposed by the Plaintiffs. The motion is fully briefed and awaiting decision by Judge Abbott. CHAIR DEVENY: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Bowers. Next we're moving on to action items, and we have a couple rules before us. The first one is the proposed amendments to the air quality operation fees for registered sources, and I'll turn this over to DEQ to give us some background,
then we'll have some public comment for discussion.

MR. MATHIEUS: Madam Chair, this is George Mathieus again. Liz Ulrich from the Air Quality Bureau will be presenting to the Board today.

CHAIR DEVENY: Go ahead, Ms. Ulrich.
MS. ULRICH: Good morning, Madam Chair, members of the Board. My name is Liz Ulrich, and I'm the supervisor of the Analysis and Planning Section of the Department's Air Quality Bureau.

I'm here today to request that Board adopt the proposed amendments of the

Administrative Rules of Montana 17.8.501, 504, 505, and 510 pertaining to air quality operation fees for registered sand and gravel, asphalt, and concrete facilities.

The Department requested the Board initiate rulemaking at their August 7 th meeting, and provided comment in support of the proposed rule at the public hearing on September 25 th, 2020. No additional comments were received. If approved by the Board, this fee structure will be used to calculate the operational fees for registered sand and gravel,
asphalt, and concrete facilities. This will allow the Department to collect sufficient revenue to support the appropriate implementation of this air quality program.

As is the case with other fee assessments, the Department will annually evaluate whether the fee rates for this registration program are adequate to fund the required work, will actively engage stakeholders in the process, and will return to the Board if necessary to adjust the fees to cover the costs of the program.

I've submitted a copy of this testimony to the Board secretary Joyce Wittenberg and the Court Reporter Laurie Crutcher. Thank you. Are there any questions?

CHAIR DEVENY: Are there any questions from Board members of Ms. Ulrich?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Seeing none, there was no public comment at the hearing, but is there any public comment today regarding whether the Board should or should not adopt this proposed rule?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Is there any public
comment?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, is there any Board discussion?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Recommendations?
Motions?
BOARD MEMBER DeARMENT: Madam Chair, this is John DeArment. I propose that we adopt the new rule as advanced by DEQ.

CHAIR DEVENY: John, could I ask you to, before that's seconded, could I ask you to also include in that motion the approval of the House Bill 521 and 311 analyses for stringency and takings with your motion.

BOARD MEMBER DeARMENT: Absolutely. I will happily revise it with that language. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIR DEVENY: And $I$ would second the motion before us. Is there any discussion by Board members?

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: This is Dexter. I've got one question.

CHAIR DEVENY: Go ahead, Dexter.
BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: And this is for Air Quality. Is this the first time you've set fees
for these particular items?
MS. ULRICH: Madam Chair, Mr. Busby, this is the first time. This is the first time this structure has been initiated, and hopefully approved, because this is a new program. The Board adopted these new rules back in 2019 to develop the registration program for these sources, rather than a case-by-case permitting.

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: Okay. So there's no history of collection on this, so the numbers that you've put out may or may not be adequate or too much, so this is just your shot for the first go around?

MS. ULRICH: Madam Chair, Mr. Busby. We have done analysis based on previous collections through our permitting process. They were previously permitted sources. So we have done the analysis of what the revenue was prior when they were permitted, compared to what will we need to collect as registered sources, and looked at their tonnage, their production information.

So we have done an analysis, and we think this is a really good start for us, but again, we will come back if we have miscalculated or we need to adjust those rates.

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: Okay. Thank you. CHAIR DEVENY: Is there any other further Board discussion?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, there's a motion and it's been seconded before the Board. I'd like to have a vote on that. All those in favor of the motion to adopt the proposed amendments and House Bill 521 and 311 analyses, please signify by saying aye.
(Response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Are there any opposed?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, the proposed amendments and rule changes are adopted. Thank you.

Next we're going to move on to the matter of the final adoption of the proposed amendments of Administrative Rules of Montana 17.30.602, and the proposed New Rule I pertaining to selenium standards for Lake Koocanusa and the Kootenai River.

And with that, $I$ would like to first -There's a lot of interest here, so $I$ kind of want to set the parameters for how we're going to
handle this. There's a lot of people obviously interested in this, and that want to speak today.

The first thing $I$ want to say is $I$ want to be clear to everybody that this is not the public hearing on this matter. That public hearing has already been held, and the hearing record has been established, and has been before the Board members and others. So I just want to be really clear about that.

So we won't be able to allow any
additional new testimony today. Something that hasn't been already included in the hearing record cannot be allowed, and there's no need to repeat information that was in the hearing record. It's all there, and people have had a chance to look at it. That's the record that the Board will be considering when making their decision on this today.

So with that, the procedure that we'll be using today is first giving the Department approximately 15 minutes to give an overview of the proposed rule, and then we're going to open it up for brief comments from, statements from proponents, and then we will get statements from opponents, and then we will take statements from
anybody else that wants to be heard.
And we will try to do our best to make sure that everybody has a chance to speak, but because of the number of people that have identified that they want to speak, I'm going to ask that you limit your oral statements to one minute, but recognize that Board members may have questions of you as we deliberate this after we hear the public comment.

And I'm going to ask Board members also to hold their questions until we have our discussion period, if they're comfortable doing that.

So Joyce and Sarah, I believe, are going coordinate the order in which people are going to be called to speak, based on how they identified themselves at the beginning of the meeting. So as Laurie suggested, when your name is called, if you can turn on your video, make sure you turn off your mute, and then you'll have your chance to speak. So we think this is probably going to be the best way to handle this zoom meeting, and we hope everybody is comfortable with that.

So with that, I'm going to ask DEQ to give their approximately 15 minute presentation,
and $I$ believe they have some slides to put up, so we'll give them a second to get that ready. MR. MATHIEUS: Madam Chair, this is George Mathieus. Today Director McGrath would like to make some opening comments, and then the presentation that you should be seeing will be led by Myla Kelly and Lauren Sullivan.

CHAIR DEVENY: Okay. Great. So
Director Shaun McGrath, go ahead.
DIRECTOR MCGRATH: Thank you, Madam
Chair, and members of the Board. So I'm the Director of DEQ, and the Department is here today before the Board asking you to adopt the proposed rule that would set site specific standards for selenium for Lake Koocanusa and the main stem of the Kootenai River.

As George said, the Department's presentation of the proposed rule will be made by two of our lead scientists on this effort, Myla Kelly, who is Water Quality Standards and Modeling Manager, and Lauren Sullivan, who is a water quality scientist in the Water Quality Division.

Additionally, Tim Davis is here. Tim is the Water Quality Division Administrator, who has also served as the co-chair of the Lake Koocanusa

Working Group, with his counterpart from British Columbia's Ministry of Environment.

I will kick off the presentation by making a few introductory remarks, and first, I just want to say I really acknowledge the tremendous amount of work that's gone into this effort.

This proposed rule is the culmination of years of work by many, many people representing various interests, and coming at it from different roles, and $I$ want to thank all of you for contributing so thoughtfully, and helping the Department develop this proposal for us.

And thanks also to the members of the public that participated in what has been a very robust conversation around this proposal, as is evidenced by the many comments in the packet. This work and this broad participation really has helped to shape the rule, the proposed rule, and given us the confidence in the end result that we bring today to the Board.

So a couple of things that $I$ want to speak to real quickly. First is there have been some comments that suggested that this has been a rushed process, or that there were political
motivations behind it. That is not the case.
This started back in 2012 when the Department listed Lake Koocanusa as threatened by selenium on the 303 (d) list, selenium being a toxic pollutant. And under the Federal Clean Water Act, Montana is required to establish standards for pollutants to ensure that uses in a water body are protected.

We started that effort then in 2014, this effort that has culminated into this rule; and in fact back in 2014, the 2020 time frame, the end of 2020 to finalize the rule, was identified at that point.

Beyond that, $I$ went in 18 months ago to meet with the Governor's office with the Governor to discuss the priorities for the Department in the remainder of our Administration. And this was something that we discussed, and the Governor again affirmed that we needed to stick with that time frame of the end of 2020 to finalize this rule. And we then communicated that to the Legislature, to the EQC, back in September of last year. So it's hardly been political, it's hardly been rushed.

And in addition to that, we've also been
quite transparent, and certainly followed MAPA in the process in the development of the rule. In fact, we've had nine public meetings and hearings just since August of this year. On top of that, we went and met with the Environmental Quality Council and with the Water Policy Interim Committee.

And Board member Tweeten, you raised back in September, you admonished us to make sure that we also were reaching out to the local elected officials that were raising concerns and questions, and we took you up on that.

We held a special meeting for Lincoln County, the local elected officials there. In addition a number of private conversations were held. I made a number of calls, as did others in the Department.

The second issue that $I$ want to respond to is there's been a suggestion of, you know, what's the urgency around this, that the Department hasn't shown any mass fish kills, or any two headed fish. But first off, that's just simply not how the Clean Water Act works.

The Clean Water Act requires us to set standards that will be protective of designated
uses. It is intended to be proactive, not reactive. If we are being reactive here, and waiting for those kinds of impacts, that's what really leads to Endangered Species Act designations, or Superfund designations.

But that said, $I$ do want to say that $I$ agree. There is really some urgency around this. Just in October, Idaho, the State of Idaho, listed Kootenai River as impaired. What that means is Montana will be getting a waste load allocation, which would require us to make sure that the water coming into Idaho meets their standards, which means we will have to reduce selenium that's actually traveling through the state out of Canada, out of British Columbia.

Montana has also found, like Idaho, levels of selenium in fish tissue above EPA's recommended criteria. This isn't a hypothetical, this is a reality that we have impacts already. And levels of selenium in the $E l k$ River up in British Columbia are at the point where even Teck's scientist has acknowledged that it's contributed to diminished fisheries there in Elk River. And indeed, the Canadian federal government is investigating Teck for die-offs of
cutthroat trout in the Elk.
Beyond that, that is, given the amount of coal mining that is already occurring, but there are additional mines that are proposed, expansion of existing mines that are proposed, so this challenge will only increase.

Neither Montana or British Columbia has a protective standard today. No one has argued that the current level of five that Montana has is protective. So it is time for this state to revise this standard to ensure that it's protective, and by doing so, also keep the pressure on our counterparts in British Columbia to do the same on their side of the border.

I come to you with great confidence today in the science that stands behind, that has informed this proposed rule; $I$ have confidence in the public participation and engagement that is taking place, the process that has been taking place; that this rule includes standards that are protective and appropriate for Lake Koocanusa and the Kootenai River, and $I$ commend them to you today for your adoption.

With that, let me now turn it to Myla and Lauren.

MS. KELLY: Thank you, Director McGrath. Good morning, Madam Chair, members of the Board. Is the volume okay? Can everybody hear okay? Great.

Again, my name is Myla Kelly. I'm the manager of Montana DEQ's Water Quality Standards and Modeling Section. And today myself and our technical project lead, Lauren Sullivan, will be providing you with a presentation to support our request to the Board today to adopt the proposed rules for selenium water quality standards for Lake Koocanusa and Kootenai River.

The proposed rules that we request your consideration for adoption are as follows: The standards are comprised of fish tissue values. These are the same for Lake Koocanusa and the Kootenai River, and they mirror EPA's national recommended criteria; and a water column value, which for Lake Koocanusa is based on site specific data, and for which the Kootenai is based again on EPA's national recommended criteria for flowing waters.

And in alignment and following State statute, the proposed Lake Koocanusa water column standard is no more stringent than the recommended

EPA 304(a) criteria, because it was developed using $304(a)$ site specific procedures. Therefore, it is a more accurate criteria than the generally applicable national lentic or lake number of 1.5 micrograms per liter. Next slide, please.

When the Board initiated rulemaking for these proposed rules, Lauren Sullivan and myself provided a comprehensive presentation to provide some background of the process of how we've arrived here, as well as the technical and scientific aspects of the standards we proposed.

This morning, rather than reiterating the material that we presented in September, we're going to present you with a summary and an explanation of the major comments we have received during this public comment process.

And before we begin with the substance of the comments, $I$ would first like to take a moment to thank the Board, our Federal, State, Tribal partners, and the many, many stakeholders that have participated in this public comment period.

The comments we received were thoughtful, impassioned, detailed, and they underscored a true, deep caring of the Koocanusa
and Kootenai watersheds. It was care for the human communities within, as well as the water quality, the fisheries, and the aquatic life.

And we understand that providing that public input, whether it's verbally, through a hearing, or through written text, requires time and thought, and we greatly appreciate that, and we have heard and received that feedback, and we have in turn responded with thought and consideration.

The majority of our comments, over 180 individual comments, were in support of the proposed standards, and in that support they noted the rigorous scientific process, the strong and lengthy collaborative effort, reasons not to delay, and consideration for the downstream water quality and endangered species.

We also heard that more time was needed to understand the science, that there was no crisis to act, and of fear of impacts to the local economy. We heard that more data and an implementation strategy were needed, and questions pertaining to the need for consensus among the scientific experts.

We will address these major themes this
morning. I'm going to summarize the comments and responses pertaining to water quality standards, and the process that we've completed, and Lauren will then summarize the more technical comments on components of the water column value, the model and background data, as well as changes that we're proposing to the rule language in response to those comments.

The foundational concept of water quality standards is a bit dry, but it's always a necessary starting point for our standards rulemaking, and $I$ have explained these concepts in our past presentations, but there does remain a misunderstanding which we have seen in some comments.

Montana has been delegated authority under the Clean Water Act to establish water quality standards, and of course, Montana's Board of Environmental Review has the authority to adopt those standards. And we have standards for multitudes of pollutants. Selenium is one of over 300 pollutants for which we have established standards in Montana.

And these provide a measure for how clean we want our water. They're established to
protect the beneficial uses of our water bodies, uses such as the propagation of aquatic life, recreation, swimming, sometimes drinking, agriculture, or industrial purposes. These are Montana's beneficial or designated uses.

And the standard reflects the level that the pollutant, of that pollutant below which that beneficial use is protected. And to make that determination, we heavily rely on science supplied at a national level from EPA's research branch -that's typically toxicological search -- and sometimes we rely on our own State driven science.

And selenium and the standards that we're discussing today is really a combination of both. It's national driven EPA guidance, and it's State level driven science.

So many commenters asked why now. Many pointed out that the lake is not at a crisis point, and some asked why we aren't using data from treatment plans, or questioned the threatened impairment listing.

And the proposed selenium standards are being set to protect our aquatic life, again, that beneficial use, and they must be, as required under the Clean Water Act, they must and are based
on sound science and rationale.
As Director McGrath was saying, it's important to remember that standards are established to prevent harm, not cure it. And this is consistent with how all of our water quality standards for both aquatic life and human health are established. For example, the Department does not wait for human population to show neurological harm to establish lead standards to protect human health.

I would note, however, that one need for immediate action stems from the fact that egg/ovary guidelines for fish tissue samples in Lake Koocanusa are already exceeded beyond the threshold deemed safe by EPA.

Similarly, water quality standards are not established based on the water body's threatened or impaired status -- they're established based on the needs of the beneficial use -- nor is treatment technology data used in establishing a standard. That data is, of course, important, but it's used in implementing a standard, not in establishing one.

We had comments asking why a site specific standard was necessary, and expressed
concern about whether that standard would be applied across the state. Selenium, as we discussed back in September, is a pollutant in which the toxicity to aquatic life is highly dependent upon site conditions, things like hydrology, water chemistry, and the species that inhabit that ecosystem.

So following the methodology outlined in
EPA's 304(a) guidance, the Department utilized that site level data to derive a water column value protective of the aquatic life in Lake Koocanusa, and the data used to drive the Koocanusa water column is exactly that. It is site specific, and it would not be applicable to other water bodies.

Many commenters expressed concern for the downstream Kootenai River protection which spans Montana and Idaho, as well as the Idaho 2020 listing of the Kootenai River as impaired for selenium.

Federal regulations require that we as a state consider and ensure the attainment of downstream, both intra and interstate water quality standards, and the proposed standards are protective of downstream uses, including the
protection of downstream species listed under the Endangered Species Act.

And as a result of Idaho's October 2020 selenium impairment, a selenium load allocation could be assigned to the State of Montana in order to reduce the load of selenium from Montana to Idaho.

Commenters requested clarification on economic impacts and concern about effects to the local economy, and we want to be very clear that there are no public or private entities discharging to the Kootenai River or Lake Koocanusa with MPDES permit effluent limits for selenium. Therefore, no permittee will be required to incur additional costs to treat wastewater for selenium.

It's also important to reiterate that the proposed standards are applicable to Lake Koocanusa and the Kootenai main stem only. The existing standards of five micrograms per liter remains the applicable selenium standard on all other State waters.

The Department completed a small
business impact analysis, finding no impacts to small business, and also assessed the cost of wastewater treatment that may be passed on to small businesses. And while there are multiple communities with public wastewater treatment systems in the watershed, none discharge selenium, and so would not be required to treat for selenium.

Regarding large businesses, the only large mine in the watershed on the US side of the border is Montanore Mine, and in their most recent permit application of the mine, Montanore Minerals corporation stated they do not believe selenium is present at the mine.

And finally, we understand the concerns that a potential impairment listing could impact real estate or construction values. However, there is no evidence that real estate values have been or will be impacted by a threatened or an impaired status of Lake Koocanusa.

In fact, we have over 1,000 impaired water body segments in Montana, and $I$ would point to the Bitterroot River, Flathead Lake, the Clark Fork River, as examples where impairment status does not correlate to real estate values.

My final slide is our comments that pertain to the process that we have undertaken
thus far. And many commenters applauded the establishment, the composition, and the transparency of the Lake Koocanusa Monitoring and Research Working Group, and the Selenium Technical Subcommittee.

And these proposed standards are derived from truly an unprecedented and multi-year analysis that involved, among many others, British Columbia Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, US Geological Survey, the US EPA, Montana Fish, Wildiffe and Parks, US Fish and Wildlife Service, multiple Tribal and First Nations, university scientists, and researchers.

And the six year timeline for this process was agreed to by all parties at the outset, and remains on schedule for the completion for the close of 2020 .

The public process. Public outreach has been extensive, more extensive than any we've undertaken with any standards setting process, and beginning in 2015, this included seven large format panel discussions, public meetings, held in northwest Montana, many smaller format meetings with local officials in the area, and just in the past year -- as Director McGrath reminded us
earlier -- many, many public meetings, as well as additional outreach opportunities occurred.

These public meetings were in addition to engaged participation with this working group, and an extensive public website which houses all the materials for our project. As with all water quality standards numbering in the hundreds, this rulemaking has followed the MAPA process, which has included WPCAC, public notices through the MAR newspapers, BER, and a robust public comment period.

Commenters questioned whether we provided adequate updates to the legislative committees, and the Department is always responsive to the Montana Legislature with any information they request. And we have briefed the Environmental Quality Council about the selenium rulemaking in 2019, presenting them with a timeline which we continue to follow today.

We also briefed the Water Policy Interim Committee in October, provided them a summary of the proposed selenium rule, and an update on the rulemaking process and schedule. And at that meeting, WPIC discussed the selenium proposal, they heard comment from the public, they
entertained a motion to lodge an informal objection to the proposed rule, they held discussion on the motion, and they voted not to object to the proposed selenium standards.

Finally, implementation and compliance.
This standard is comprised of fish tissue and water column values, and the Department will undertake development of $a$ fish tissue assessment method, and will do so in collaboration with the State of Idaho, Federal partners, and stakeholders, utilizing our fish tissue standard operating procedure that we developed in 2016.

And with respect to compliance, $I$ think that answer is simple, but complicated. Simply put, a water quality -- a Clean Water Act approved standard provides the foundation for transboundary clean water commitments. So just as Idaho, with the standard in place, can look upstream to Montana to ensure they receive clean water, this can be done on an international transboundary basis as well.

And an established protective standard allows Canadian industry and Canadian regulators the certainty to plan for and apply treatment technologies in permit conditions to ensure that
that standard is met.
And once the appropriate standard is in place, if there are exceedences of that standard, there's many, many different scenarios that could occur, and $I$ can't predict what those would be. It could be conversations with British Columbia; it could be State department involvement; it could be a TMDL load allocation. The key point is that the bottom line is setting the standard is the first and the most important step in removing any of those scenarios forward.

And because of the significant past, present, and planned future mining actions in the Elk Valley, and because of the extremely engaged Tribal nations and stakeholders, this watershed has and is receiving substantial attention from the US State Department, the current Trump Federal Administration, our Montana Federal elected officials, and Canadian and federal provincial agencies.

And significant US Federal fiscal appropriations and staff allocation underscore that importance. And we've built the foundation of that critical cross-boundary collaboration, monitoring, and research, however that unfolds in
the future. Lauren.
CHAIR DEVENY: Ms. Sullivan, before you start. This is Board Chair Chris Deveny. I clearly was misinformed on the length of DEQ's presentation, so do you think you can give your presentation in ten minutes? I just want to get a handle on time here. I don't want to cut you short. This is really good information. Is that appropriate?

MS. SULLIVAN: This is Lauren. Madam Chair, $I$ will make sure that $I$ keep my portion to ten minutes.

CHAIR DEVENY: Okay. Thank you.
MS. SULLIVAN: So thank you, Madam Chair, and members of the Board. I'll continue with addressing comments received pertaining to impacts on current water column and fish tissue levels. Commenters stated both, "Don't delay. We already see impacts," while other commenters stated, "There are no impacts. Current concentrations are stable, and not exceeding any current standard."

So first whether or not Lake Koocanusa has a stable water concentration in compliance with the current Montana standard of five, or

EPA's 1.5 , does not determine the protectiveness of the standard. This is particularly important in this case where the Department has determined those standards are not protective of the beneficial use for Lake Koocanusa.

And as Myla previously mentioned, water quality standards are set to protect the beneficial use. The Department does not wait until impacts occur to set a standard, and that is applicable to all water quality standards.

Second, at current water column concentrations around one microgram per liter, there have been nine individual fish found with egg/ovary selenium levels at or above 15.1. Those are shown on this figure, and span across three species. These levels are concerning, and suggest reproductive impairment may be occurring in Lake Koocanusa.

Water quality standards must protect downstream use, and the Kootenai River has recently been listed by Idaho DEQ as impaired for selenium due to high levels of selenium found in fish tissue. These results in Lake Koocanusa and downstream are evidence that current conditions around one microgram per liter are not protecting
the beneficial use in Lake Koocanusa or the Kootenai River.

Comments received about background data. DEQ collected 149 samples from 44 streams and seven lakes from 2003 through 2018 . The Department reviewed those samples, along with recent USGS Kootenai River tributary data, sampling of two Montana streams in 2018 and 2019 .

Of all of those samples, only one single sample was detected -- that was in 2018 -- was detected with the lab using a very low detection limit, following a modern protocol. The sample was reported as 0.081 micrograms per liter, which is much lower than the proposed standard. Collectively these data suggest that the selenium contribution from tributaries to Lake Koocanusa and the main stem Kootenai River are very low.

Addressing comments on sediment selenium
for Lake Koocanusa. Comments were received stating long term data sets are showing no settling is occurring. The Department is unaware of any study that characterizes long term concentration changes of selenium in Lake Koocanusa sediments.

The only study, to the knowledge of the

Department, was done by DEQ in 2013. In that study, sediments were collect in a single sampling year, and showed statistically higher concentrations in reservoir sediment than shoreline soils, and showed statistically higher concentrations at the forebay near the dam, suggesting accumulation may be occurring.

And whether or not the bottom of Lake Koocanusa has accumulated selenium over the years is not the primary issue at hand. It is important to remember that the process described in the ecosystem scale model has little to do with the direct selenium buildup in bottom sediment, and more to do with the amount of selenium in the water column, and how readily it enriches the suspended particulate matter, which is then transferred through the food chain.

Moving right along to address comments on consensus of the Selenium Technical Subcommittee. Comments were received stating the 0.8 is within the range recommended by the majority of the technical subcommittee members, while other comments stated there was no consensus.

DEQ and the British Columbia Ministry of

Environment communicated the process for receiving Selenium Technical Subcommittee recommendations at the November 2019 in-person meeting. There was clear communication to clarify consensus was not being sought, and that all final decisions were to be made by $D E Q$ and British Columbia.

There was an opportunity to discuss this at the meeting, where an estimated 50 people were in attendance. And on the right shows the make-up of the Selenium Technical Subcommittee. And while the committee has been discussing the modeling for years, a half day Zoom teleconference was held, with 100 percent attendance and participation by the Technical Subcommittee.

There were robust discussions, recommendations on model inputs provided, and discussed in detail. Additional written and verbal recommendations were provided by some members of the Selenium Technical Subcommittee.

The Department worked collaboratively with the British Columbia Ministry of Environment in reviewing all verbal and written recommendations. Those recommendations guided the decisions made by the Department on model inputs and selecting a protective standard.

Addressing comments on the model. The ecosystem scale model is peer reviewed in the literature, and widely accepted as the state of the science for selenium biodynamic modeling. The ecosystem scale model is recommended for use in EPA's guidance document, and it is the model used to develop the nationally recommended criteria.

The peer review ecosystem scale model was tailored to the Lake Koocanusa ecosystem, using site specific data. The structure of the model was retained. Only model inputs were altered.

For criteria determination, the EPA guidance document indicates the greatest reduction in uncertainty when translating a selenium fish tissue concentration to a water column concentration is achieved by collecting temporally and spatially coincident site specific partitioning data, or Kd data.

This was done in Lake Koocanusa in the model development, using multiple years of data. You can see this parameter labeled in the bottom right of the equation. And just to remind the group, the $K d$ is the environmental partitioning between dissolved and particulate selenium, and is
the base of the food web, and environment specific.

Literature trophic transfer factors were used. These were all well documented and tested both in the lab and the field, and they were tailored to the Lake Koocanusa site conditions using a 60 percent bioavailability factor. The numerator is the tissue criterion element or threshold for which the fish tissue must not exceed.

Addressing comments on the derivation of the site specific 0.8 micrograms per liter for Lake Koocanusa. As previously stated, the goal of this work was to develop an aligned site specific water column standard for Lake Koocanusa. A challenge of that work has been the differing protection goals between British Columbia and Montana.

To address this challenge, the Department followed two routes, one that worked collaboratively with British Columbia to make a more stringent regulatory requirement than $B C$; and second route that considered the EPA recommended whole body selenium threshold of 8.5 to remain in step with our US process.

The Department considered the Selenium Technical Subcommittee recommendations, both oral and written, to develop the scenarios with model inputs displayed on this slide.

Route one comprised three scenarios developed in collaboration with British Columbia, and among those three, the Department selected scenario three, which included a whole body tissue threshold of 5.6, a value aligned with British Columbia's guidelines and protection goals.

The trophic fish model or piscivorous model was selected, assuming forage fish have a diet of 100 percent aquatic insects; a 45 percent bioavailability factor applied, which while less conservative than the 60 percent proposed by the USGS, this was deemed appropriate to consider when applying the 5.6 whole body threshold. And the median Kd percentile was selected, again determined appropriate if a lower 5.6 whole body value was applied. This resulted in 0.8 micrograms per liter.

For the second route, the Department considered the EPA recommended whole body tissue threshold of 8.5 with the same trophic fish model at 100 percent aquatic insects, retained the USGS
proposed 60 percent bioavailability, and selected the 75 th percentile of the Kd distribution determined appropriate when applying the 8.5 whole body value.

Both of these different approaches arrived at a protective selenium water column criterion of 0.8 micrograms per liter, which meets the protection goals previously defined by the technical subcommittee. It ensures protection of the beneficial use, and the protection of downstream Kootenai River.

Addressing comments on the 0.8 versus 1.5 micrograms per liter for Lake Koocanusa. EPA has recommended the 1.5 micrograms per liter for lentic water bodies. That value may be over or under protective for some sites in the United States due to the local environmental factors affecting selenium bioaccumulation.

EPA acknowledges this, which is why they provided guidance for developing a site specific criteria. This is what was done for Lake Koocanusa, in part because of the strong partnerships. It was the ability to undergo this large effort, and also because egg/ovary fish tissue levels were showing values higher than
15.1, and water column concentrations of one, suggesting 1.5 is not protective.

Based on selective model inputs, 85 percent of the results are below 1.5. You can see that on this graph. Below the lines means not protective. The majority of the orange dots fall below the line, and shows us that 1.5 is clearly not the protective standard for Lake Koocanusa. Through this modeling effort, it was the objective to consider ecologically significant species, and the long term protection for fish in all parts of the reservoir, including those with the most sensitive food webs. The 1.5 does not meet the protection goals for Lake Koocanusa. The 0.8 micrograms per liter meets these objectives, and protects the beneficial use.

Some minor points of clarification were updated in the rule based on comments received. First, the Department has clarified the frequency and duration for fish tissue samples, stating fish tissue standards will be instantaneous measurements not to be exceeded.

Fish tissue sample results shall be reported as a single value representing an average of individual fish samples, or a composite sample,
each option requiring a minimum number of five individuals from the same species.

Second, language was included to clarify the hierarchy of the fish tissue sampling, stating when fish egg/ovary samples are unavailable, and the aquatic ecosystem is in steady state, fish muscle or whole body standards supersede the water column standards.

And Myla, I'll turn it back to you.
MS. KELLY: In conclusion, we request that the Board adopt the proposed water quality standards as referenced, and it's been a pleasure sharing those comment summaries with you. We are ready to take your questions, and apologize that went a little longer than expected.

CHAIR DEVENY: Thank you, Myla and Lauren. Out of respect for our Court Reporter, who has been working very hard all morning with us, we're going to take a ten minute break, and so we'll reconvene in ten minutes. So if everybody could please be back in time, that would be great.

> (Recess taken)

CHAIR DEVENY: We're going to reconvene. Joyce, could you please take roll call.

MS. WITTENBERG: Chair Deveny.

CHAIR DEVENY: Here.
MS. WITTENBERG: David Lehnherr.
BOARD MEMBER LEHNHERR: Here.
CHAIR DEVENY: Dexter Busby.
BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: Here.
MS. WITTENBERG: John Dearment.
BOARD MEMBER DeARMENT: Here.
MS. WITTENBERG: Chris Tweeten.
BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: Here.
CHAIR DEVENY: Jerry Lynch.
BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Here.
MS. WITTENBERG: The Board is present.
CHAIR DEVENY: All right. Great. Thank you. I wanted to thank DEQ for that presentation. I think that there was a lot of clarity there.

And unless the Board members have any real burning questions of $D E Q$ at this time, I'd really like to move into the next phase, and listen to the statements by the proponents. Are Board members all right with that? Okay. Good.

So with that, I'd like to move to the statements of proponents, and I've asked Joyce and Sarah to help facilitate that, because there are a lot of people that want to talk.

And I'm asking you to please limit the
time that you speak to just one minute, and $I$ know that might be not enough for some, but hopefully it is. Again, this is not a hearing. It's a public comment period to provide input to the Board as to whether or not we should adopt these proposed rules.

So with that, I'm going to ask Joyce and Sarah to please facilitate the testimony from the proponents.

MS. CLERGET: Chris, do you want to do the ex parte clarification now, or do you want to wait for that?

CHAIR DEVENY: Let's go ahead and do that, now that you brought it up. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Great. So I just wanted to clarify for the record. In the Board packet materials there are some emails that were included that were sent from a member of the public to the Board, Mr. Hadden to the Board, and that constitutes ex parte contact.

It is very much not allowed under MAPA, under the Montana Administrative Procedures Act, and under the ethical rules. We included those materials as a show of transparency, so that everybody knew that the Board members had received
them, but the Board members also understand, and $I$ have advised them and am publicly advising them now, that they cannot consider those emails as they were not submitted within the appropriate comment period on the rules as contemplated by MAPA, and they do constitute ex parte contact. So both the emails, and $I$ believe there was a fact sheet attached to it, will not be and should not be considered by the Board. And that general statement is to everyone to remind them ex parte contact is not permitted, and please don't do that.

And then Chris, $I$ just wanted to clarify again, as we had talked about, that this public comment period is not part of the record for rulemaking. It is part of the record for this Board hearing, but the record, just like the record on a contested case, is the record that occurred during the proceeding. The record in this case that you're making your decision on is that contained within the rulemaking hearing, comments, responses to comments.

So Chris, does that cover everything you wanted me to do by way of intro?

CHAIR DEVENY: Yes, thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Then I'm going to go through. I've got my list of proponents. A reminder that it's one minute. I will cut you off at one minute. I've got my timer. I'm going to run through my list, and then George $I$ know is keeping track as well.

If at the end of my list, George, you have any that I've missed, please speak up. And then I'll also ask if there's anybody else who is not on my list to speak up at that time.

Hopefully I've got everyone who put their name forward as wanting to speak.

So starting with the proponents, our first proponent will be William Geer. Please unmute yourself, state your name, your affiliation, and one minute.

MR. GEER: Can you hear me okay?
MS. Clerget: Yes.
MR. GEER: Okay. Thank you. I'm
William Geer. I'm speaking on behalf of the
Montana Wildife Federation as Past President, and also as board member of Hellgate Hunters and Anglers in Missoula. And your thoughtful presentation so far has allowed me to scratch off most of my comments, to the benefit of everybody.

But we strongly support the proposed standards, the site specific standards for selenium on the Kootenai River and Lake Koocanusa. And you have shown that selenium is indeed a serious threat to Montana waters, and you have approached it on a professional level with expertise, and we appreciate it.

Both the Montana Wildlife Federation and Hellgate Hunters and Anglers support the proposed standards. We commend the Department of Environmental Quality for providing a collaborative and transparent process in setting the standards, especially the adequate public participation in the last several years.

Adopting these standards now will help protect our water quality, aquatic life, and local communities from the adverse impacts of mining pollution originating in British Columbia. I will cut it right there. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Next Christopher Servheen, please. You have one minute. MR. SERVHEEN: My name is Chris Servheen, and I'm the Vice President for issues for the Montana Wildlife Federation representing 5,000 members in Montana.

The federation supports DEQ's recommended standards for selenium levels in Lake Koocanusa and the Kootenai River because these standards are science based, and help preserve healthy fisheries and aquatic habitat in the Kootenai watershed.

If there is any uncertainty about the most appropriate levels for selenium in the Kootenai River, this uncertainty argues for a more protective standard rather than a weak standard or delay. The selenium standard for the Lake Koocanusa and Kootenai River should be set in 2020 and not delayed.

The Montana Wildife Federation supports DEQ's selenium standards, and we congratulate DEQ on developing these standards through a science based collaborative process. Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

MS. CLERGET: Thank You. Now, Gregory Hoffman.

MR. HOFFMAN: Thank You. My name is Greg Hoffman. I'm a fishery biologist for the US Army Corps of Engineers at Libby Dam. I'm speaking as a 25 year resident and biologist in the Kootenai. I've been involved with species
recovery efforts since the get-go, trying to provide ecosystem function and a regulated system at Libby Dam.

I would just like to state that the efforts that have gone into the river since I've been on the ground are tremendous. I won't speak longer than that about that, and you're going to hear more about that later.

But $I$ think failure to adopt this standard is going to be a huge irreversible step backwards in terms of ecosystem recovery and functionality in the river and reservoir, and adoption of it is going to be a giant step forward, and I appreciate the efforts to say that. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Genny Hoyle.
MS. HOYLE: Thank You, Madam Chair, members of the Board. My name is Genny Hoyle. I'm a biologist speaking on behalf of the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho. As a member of the Lake Koocanusa Monitoring and Research Committee, and a member of the Selenium Technical Subcommittee, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho supports Montana DEQ site specific criteria process that was supported by sound, rigorous, and defensible science.

And we also support the selection of 0.8 micrograms per liter of selenium as the site specific criterion. Water chemistry and fish tissue data being collected by the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho in the Kootenai River below Libby Dam is showing that the selenium from the Elk River mining is reaching the lower Kootenai River all the way into Kootenay Lake in BC.

The selenium from the Elk River mining projects is pervasive and persistent. Mountain whitefish egg tissue in the Kootenai River in Idaho is showing exceedences of the US EPA selenium criteria of 15.1 , with some values double the criteria.

Fresh water mussels, mountain whitefish, Kootenai River white sturgeon, and burbot tissue samples have concentrations of selenium that are concerning. Burbot egg tissue samples from this year have elevated selenium, with some values approaching the US EPA criteria.

MS. CLERGET: Your one minute is up. Please finish your sentence.

MS. HOYLE: The Kootenai Tribe respectfully requests no delay in Montana DEQ's request for adoption of the site specific
criteria. Thank you.
MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Mr. Hadden, Dave Hadden.

MR. HADDEN: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair, and Board members, and thanks for this opportunity.

Regretfully $I$ think this issue has become controversial. Really it seems to come down to whether one trusts the independence and professionalism of our own people and scientists. As you know, the consensus range of selenium values among our independent scientists was six, point six, point nine parts per billion for the reservoir, and this range included values recommended by BC's own scientists; whereas Teck on the other hand has offered a value of 1.5 parts per billion.

Personally, $I$ think it may come down to whether we trust the recommended standards, and want to protect the beneficial uses for Montana. Will we trust our own people, or will we rely on the information from Teck.

You may hear from the opponents that you should postpone adoption of this rule, or that you should increase the standard to 1.5 for Koocanusa
as a compromise. Please adopt DEQ's proposed value. 1.5 is a clean win for $T e c k$, and a very big loss to all the Montanans and others who have worked in good faith over the past six years to bring you this scientifically defensible rule. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Colby Blair.
MR. BLAIR: Thank you. Good morning. I
want to just say thank you for the attention that's been given to this issue. My name is Colby Blair. I'm an outfitter and guide on the Kootenai River in Idaho. I represent eight employees in Idaho.

Several of the rivers in Idaho suffer from unchecked mining pasts. These rivers still can't be safely fished or recreated in, and we have signs that are posted on their banks warning people to not play in the sand and dirt due to contaminants like lead and selenium. These rivers are no longer a part of the state's recreation or economic use, and rob many of our other industries of use beyond our lifetimes.

So in Idaho we fully support adopting the new standards. We place trust not only in the upstream science, but our own experiences in

Idaho. Water pollution is not just a thorn that degrades our natural resources, but it's an occupational hazard for us here. So we appreciate the seriousness that you're giving these standards. That's it for me.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Jim Vashro. MR. VASHRO: I'm Jim Vashro, President of Flathead Wildife in Kalispell, Montana.

Lake Koocanusa and the Kootenai River are some of the most popular fishing waters Montana. We see that status as threatened by increasing selenium levels. The gerrard rainbow and native burbot fisheries are struggling. Lake Koocanusa holds Montana's largest population of threatened bull trout, and in recent years that fishery has been reduced to catch and release due to declining population levels.

Fishing is a vital part of Lincoln County's economy, and clean water is important to maintaining property values. Flathead Wildife strongly endorses the proposed standards to protect Montana's water quality and aquatic life. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Trevor Selch.
MR. SELCH: Hi. Trevor Selch. I'm a
fishery pollution biologist with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. I'm also the fisheries representative and Chair of WPCAC. And I am in favor of the Board adopting the site specific criteria as proposed for Lake Koocanusa and the Kootenai River, and I'm fully supportive of the comments made today by Director McGrath, Myla Kelly, and Lauren Sullivan.

I've been monitoring selenium
concentrations in fish in Lake Koocanusa since 2008, and have been involved in the monitoring and research working group since its inception in 2015, as we worked towards site specific criteria. This effort included multiple state, Federal, provincial agencies, and selenium experts from across North America.

This has not been a rushed process, but rather a carefully developed, scientific based process to determine protective numbers needed for the lake. It's absolutely imperative that Montana adopt the proposed selenium criteria for Lake Koocanusa and the Kootenai River now, as the current criteria of five micrograms per liter is not protective of aquatic life. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Shelly Fyant.

MS. FYANT: Good morning, Madam Chair, members of the Board. My name is Shelly Fyant. And $I$ wanted to thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the 8,000 Salish and Kootenai Tribal members $I$ represent.

Water is the life blood of our planet. As native peoples, according to our creation stories, we were given the responsibility to speak for those who can't, and that includes the animals, birds, fish, plant life, air, and water.

Just a reminder that we all live downstream, and sadly we can't trust those living upstream to be considerate of our waters. Our people primarily live a subsistence lifestyle, depending on those fish and wildlife to eat. Those plants are our food and medicines.

That is why this decision is critical to the 8,000 people that $I$ represent, as well as my grandchildren and those yet unborn. We strongly support the site specific selenium standards on behalf of the Salish and Kootenai people.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. And is Stu
Levit going to speak as well? I had you guys on the same chat. Stu Levit, if you'd like to speak, now is the time.

MR. LEVIT: Thank you. I appreciate that. My name is Stu Levit. I'm an attorney with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. The Tribes have worked with the State of Montana, US EPA, as part of what has been a robust public process.

Importantly that process has also included robust science, including foremost experts in selenium, fish, and water, and included important tribal data and input relevant to fish and fish uses.

Like many water bodies in the Tribe's aboriginal territory and on the Flathead Reservation, Tribal uses of water resources include common fishing and hunting, but also subsistence and cultural uses that may be uncommon to many people. These depend on clean water to supply healthy and safe fisheries.

The egg/ovary and other selenium studies showing significant and troublesome contamination of fish is of particular concern to the Tribe. We thank the DEQ for its process, and urge the Board to adopt the criteria to begin what will be a long process necessary to reverse ongoing contamination. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Ayn Schmit.
MS. SCHMIT: Thank you, Madam Chair, Board members. My name is Ayn Schmit, and I'm water policy advisor for EPA.

Under the Clean Water Act, states must submit new water quality standards to EPA for review and action. Our regulation requires the state to demonstrate that revised criteria protect the designated uses and are based on sound science.

EPA's national selenium guidance includes recommended methods for developing site specific standards. Montana used the mechanistic model approach recommended by EPA to derive the Lake Koocanusa draft standard.

A protective standard for transboundary Lake Koocanusa is also an important element in the US Government's engagement with our Canadian partners, and will help to aid compliance with international obligations. While EPA does not prejudge revised standards prior to the State's submission, we commend DEQ for the collaborative and inclusive process to develop a site specific selenium standard for Lake Koocanusa. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Michael

Jamison.
MR. JAMISON: Thanks to the Board for having us today. You all have heard from me before, and I'm sure you'll hear from others today, about our strong support for the 0.8 selenium standard and for the long term scientific analysis that arrived at that limit.

You'll also hear, I'm sure, about why it doesn't make a lot of sense to allow a foreign corporation to influence Montana regulatory processes, especially when that company is one of North America's heaviest pollutors, and is under Federal investigation for water quality violation.

You'll also hear about how all the stakeholders except that company have recommended a selenium standard between 0.6 and 0.9 . What I'd like to address is the scope of the scale of the question before you today.

In terms of scope, this is a site specific water quality standard. It by definition does not have any effect whatsoever on other Montana waters, and cannot be applied to any other waters. This is a very narrow scope of reference. In terms of scale, the question is likewise narrow, and concerns only the selenium
limit beyond which these fish and these waters cannot survive. That level is knowable, and that level has been definitely determined by multiple agencies over multiple years, and all other considerations frankly are just noise, and do not seem relevant to the question at hand.

MS. CLERGET: Your minute is up. MR. JAMISON: Thank you very much. MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Lars Sander-Green.

MR. SANDER-GREEN: Thank you. I'm Lars Sander-Green. I'm with WildSight, a conservation organization north of the border. I want to use my minute to briefly address a couple comments that we have heard repeatedly from Teck in the media against this rule.

One is that the experts on the selenium technical subcommittee did not come to a consensus, where the fact of the matter is that all of the experts who made recommendations recommended levels between . 6 and . 9 micrograms per liter, except one scientist, and that one scientist it turns out is a consultant for Teck, who was being paid by them to represent them.

And secondly, $I$ want to address the claim that the average selenium levels in Lake Koocanusa have been stabilized since 2014. This is absolutely cherry picking of data. The fact of the matter is that selenium varies from year to year significantly, based on weather conditions.

And so what we've done is we've looked at the upstream data coming into Lake Koocanusa and Elk River, and the downstream data again in Canada in the Kootenai River at Creston. And in both those cases, we see a clear upward trend that has continued through 2014. In fact, in both cases we've seen higher selenium levels since 2014 than we've ever seen before then. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Garrett Visser.

MR. VISSER: Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. My name is Garrett Visser. I represent the Idaho Wildife Federation. IWF is Idaho's oldest and largest coalition of hunting and fishing groups. Many of our members recreate on Idaho's Kootenai River, and some rely on this water body as outfitters and guides.

Despite no significant source of selenium on the $U S$ side of the drainage, we have

Kootenai River reaches in Idaho that are impaired due to selenium pollution. We believe these proposed standards, developed thanks to the years of collaborative efforts, are crucial for the strength and future of both Montana and Idaho's Kootenai River fishery.

IWF fully supports adoption of these standards to further protect the water quality and the designated beneficial use in both Montana and Idaho from mine pollution. Thanks to our neighbors in Montana for their commitment to a scientifically driven and collaborative process, and we support the adoption of these standards. MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Eddie Petroschen.

MR. PETROSCHEN: Hello. Eddie Petroschen. I'm a conservation specialist with WildSight. We've heard a lot about how there are no two-headed fish. No one believes there should be any two-headed fish anywhere, because that's not how any of this works.

Selenium is a dangerous pollutant. It acts in very small concentrations, building up in the reproductive organs of fish. With lower concentrations, we don't notice effects, but if selenium in fish ovaries increases, the danger silently increases.

Concentrations can reach a point where reproductive failures start to happen. That's the point we're at with fish in Koocanusa, according to the data that's been collected to set this limit. With these selenium concentrations, eggs don't hatch, or the fry don't survive long enough to get to deformities.

And the curve for reproductive effects with selenium is very steep. As selenium increases, we can go from 90 percent survival to zero percent survival. And we're already seeing selenium near twice that level seasonally near the border.

It's critical for Montana to act now, rather than allowing selenium to continue to rise. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Sue Ireland.
MS. IRELAND: Thank you. Good morning,
Madam Chair, Board members. My name is Sue Ireland, and I've had the honor of working for the Kootenai Tribe for the past two-and-a-half decades.

The Tribe is taking a leadership role

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along with many partners in implementing action aimed at restoring the river's habitat, and the special creatures that inhabit this place, including the endangered Kootenai River white sturgeon, and the lower Kootenai River burbot. We've made many strides forward in improving habitat, stabilizing endangered populations, bringing back the nearly extinct burbot population in the lower Kootenai to the point of being able to provide a subsistence fishery to the Tribal citizens, and sport fishing for the local public.

We are very, very alarmed by the trend we're now observing in selenium levels in the water and in fish tissues, especially since selenium is known to cause reproductive harm. It is so extremely disheartening, especially after having provided all this care and love to the Kootenai River and to the native fishes that inhabit it, to have all these actions now threatened by the very water that is supposed to sustain the life in the Kootenai.

We need criteria that's protective.
There's already been impairment. Please adopt the proposed rules for selenium standards for Lake

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Koocanusa and Kootenai River. We support the criteria, and there's no reason to delay this decision. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Dave Blackburn.
(No response)
MS. CLERGET: Dave Blackburn.
(No response)
MS. CLERGET: We'll move on. Jill
Weitz.
MS. WEITZ: Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the Board. My name is Jill Weitz, and I'm a former compliance and enforcement officer with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, where $I$ was tasked with inspecting mines through the state.

I currently serve as the Director of Salmon Beyond Borders, which is a transboundary rivers campaign, and $I$ am based out of Juneau, Alaska.

Since 2013, we have been working alongside sporting, commercial fishermen, business owners, tour operators, and tribes in the region to defend and sustain our wild salmon rivers, that have more than twelve large scale open pit mines
in various stages near their headwaters in British Columbia, including the notorious Tulsequah Chief Mine, which was abandoned by Teck, formerly Teck Cominco, in 1957, and has been leaching acid mine drainage, and pissing off commercial fishermen in the Tulsequah River watershed ever since.

Teck is driving full speed ahead to develop the Shaft Creek and Galore Creek mega-mines, each within the Stikine River watershed, which is one of the largest salmon producing rivers in the region, only second to that of the Taku.

You may recall that in 2016 , Teck's Red Dog Mine in Alaska officially released 756 pounds of toxic chemicals, making it America's most toxic releasing facility that year.

MS. CLERGET: Time is up.
MS. WEITZ: Please adopt the proposed. 8 standard with no delay. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Dr. Rachel Malison.

MS. MALISON: The Federal Clean Water Act and Montana Water Quality Act require that we protect the designated uses for all users in Montana. It is time to set protective standards
for aquatic life.
The proposed standard is backed by comprehensive and sound scientific data, and years of effort. I support the adoption of the new selenium criteria, and there's no reason to delay this decision. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Brad Smith.
MR. SMITH: Thank you, Madam Chair, and members of the Board. My name is Brad Smith. I'm with the Idaho Conservation League.

I want to emphasize the importance of the 0.8 micrograms per liter standard for Lake Koocanusa. Anything weaker than that just simply won't do.

As you know, the current average concentration of selenium in the water column of Lake Koocanusa is one microgram per liter, and at that level we're already seeing impairment, not just in fish in Lake Koocanusa, but downstream here in Idaho.

Samples of fish taken from the Kootenai
River are already at least one and a half times the EPA recommended threshold, so we really need to have a standard that is stronger than one.

Thank you.
MS. CLERGET: Thank you. David Brooks.
MR. BROOKS: Hi. David Brooks
representing Montana Trout Unlimited.
The selenium standard the BER has the opportunity to establish today not only represents a fair and sound protection for some of Montana's most wild and valuable waters, and not only ensures the sustainability of a growing outdoor rec economy and industry in the area, and not only protects from potentially life threatening harm to all manner of sport fish, wild fish, native fish, endangered fish, birds, wildlife, and future generations of Lincoln County residents and visitors.

It not only is based on the best possible science, but it also represents the best version of the public process in taking care of our natural resources in Montana. Thank you to DEQ staff and Director McGrath for once again making these facts abundantly clear today.

It would be detrimental to Montana if disinformation went out over the open, fair, patient, proactive and legal process that has led to this legitimate and much needed standard that
the BER has the power to establish today in the name of doing right by Montana for Montanans.

For those reasons, Montana DU and its 5,000 members and supporters thank the BER for your consideration of adopting this proposal.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Clayton Elliott.

MR. ELLIOTT: Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the Board of Environmental Review. I will be brief. Clayton Elliott. I represent Montana Trout Unlimited as well, and suffice it to say $I$ will defer to my boss who just spoke for our official comments, and also the comment in the record.

I just wanted to reiterate our deep appreciation and thanks for the staff of the Department of Environmental Quality, the Board of Environmental Review, for thorough, transparent, collaborative process grounded in science. It has been a long time coming, and we just wanted to be on record officially supporting and being appreciative of that process, so thank you for your service, and thank you for your opportunity to comment today.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Erin Sexton.

MS. SEXTON: Erin Sexton. Thanks. So my name is Erin. I'm a researcher at the University of Montana Flathead Lake Biological Station. I've studied the Elk River and Koocanusa since 2000 when $I$ first collected water quality downstream of the mine, and over that time, I've participated in many processes related to those mines.

Over the last twenty years, the mines have expanded, and the contaminants are increased in the Elk River, Koocanusa Reservoir, and the Kootenai River downstream.

I'm also a member of the Koocanusa and Selenium Technical Committees, and have represented the Confederated Salish Tribes at both of those tables since day one in 2014.

Based on the years of objective collaborative science and expertise that have brought us to this point, there is absolutely no scientific justification for not adopting the selenium standard today. In fact, it could be reasonably argued that we are late in getting to this decision.

Regardless, $I$ want to commend DEQ for leading this effort in collaboration with the
province of $B C$. This is a good news story, where defensible science, a fair and transparent process, and a collaborative effort, have lead to a sound recommendation for a protective selenium standard. I am here to express my unequivocal support for the Board approval of a site specific selenium standard of 0.8 for the Koocanusa Reservoir, and 3.1 for the Kootenai River. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Randal McNair.
MR. McNAIR: Thank you Chair. Thank you Board. My name is Randal McNair. I'm the Elk Valley Conservation coordinator for the Elk Valley.

When $I$ first heard about the growing selenium crisis in the Elk River, my wife was pregnant with our first child. This year she graduates from university. When $I$ first heard about it, it was 1998, and the Elk Valley Selenium Task Force was formed to address this crisis.

Teck sat on that task force. They've been operating coal mines in the Elk Valley since 1991, and are fully aware and have been fully aware of this crisis for years.
I spent fifteen years as Mayor and

Counselor for the city of Fernie, and during that entire time, selenium was an issue in our community, as it continues to be more than six years later. We've continually relied on industry rather than government to ensure the safety of our waters and our rivers. This has not worked for over two decades. It's time for government to begin to take hold. Thank you very much.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. John Bergefske.
(No response)
MS. CLERGET: John Bergefske.
MR. BERGEFSKE: Thanks for the
opportunity to speak with you today. I wanted to make one particular point that $I$ don't think has been brought up thus far in the presentations.

And that is the extreme importance of moving quickly to adopt this scientifically rigorous standard, and that is the fact that here in British Columbia, we are faced with mine expansions, both a major mine expansion by $T e c k$, which would continue mining right up until 2070 ; and there are at least three other coal mines being developed, and they're going to go into an environmental assessment process starting in the
new year.
We expect at least two of those processes in the near future. And it's very important $I$ think that for the water quality, both for British Columbia, and Montanans, Idahoans, that we have a standard that is being recognized, and when these environmental assessments take place, that this needs to be incorporated.

Without such a standard, if we have a lower standard, or go forward without a standard, it's going to make it much more difficult to control the future of selenium pollution in the Kootenai River system. Thanks for the opportunity to speak with you this morning.

MS. CLERGET: All right. Thank you. Camille LeBlanc.

MS. LeBLANC: Hi. My name is Camille LeBlanc, as she said. I'm representing Friends of Kootenay Lake Stewardship Society based in Nelson, BC. We are a local small non-profit with concerns about the selenium levels in the Kootenay Lake water system, so in that way we support the DEQ supposed selenium standard.

Our concern lies in the risk that
selenium poses to the reproductive health of

Kootenay Lake fish species that already experience reproductive challenges in Kootenay Lake, most to notably the white sturgeon, as has been mentioned in previous comments.

Montana and $B C$ have worked well together to address ecosystem concerns on the shared water body, and we hope that we will continue to work together to not only meet healthy water quality standards, but exceed them.

Friends of Kootenay Lake will work with local stewardship agencies to support the monitoring of selenium levels in Kootenay Lake and along the Kootenai River. Thank you so much for your time.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Kendra Norwood.

MS. NORWOOD: Good morning, Madam Chair, and members of the Board. Kendra Norwood speaking for the West Kootenay EcoSociety in British Columbia, a proponent of proposed selenium standards.

Repeating what others have said, selenium is known to cause reproductive problems in fish species. The white sturgeon, which lives and travels throughout the Kootenai River and BC,

Montana, and Idaho, are listed as endangered in the US and Canada, largely due to their reproductive problems. Selenium could put already endangered sturgeon populations further at risk.

It's concerning that current levels in Lake Koocanusa could rise with new mining projects, and therefore lead to higher levels that are already seen downstream in Kootenay Lake.

We need strong regulations based on strong science now to protect the health of our people, fish, and wildlife, by ensuring the health of our water. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. John Avery.
(No response)
MS. CLERGET: John Avery.
(No response)
MS. CLERGET: Bill Hanlon.
MR. HANLON: Thank you. Good morning, and thanks for the opportunity to provide comment to the Board of Environmental Review. My name is Bill Hanlon. I presently sit on the North American Board of Directors for Back Country Hunters and Anglers.

Back Country Hunters and Anglers is a continental conservation organization and the
voice for our wild public lands, clean water, and wildiffe, and we support the implementation of site specific selenium standards for Lake Koocanusa.

On a personal level, $I$ have lived in Elk Valley for 32 years on acreage north of Sparwood along the Elk River, downstream of three coal mines, and adjacent to Teck's Lion Creek operations.

I manage a fishing lodge called the Elk River Lodge that borders the Elk River. Our drinking water is tested quarterly for selenium and other mine constituents by Teck, and the selenium levels in the drinking water have been found to be the highest in the Elk Valley, and surpass British Columbia drinking water guidelines. Teck now provides potable water to our lodge, but our water source is still contaminated.

One last quick observation I'd like to mention. During the process of trying to reduce selenium and other mining contaminants, and the development and implementation of the Elk Valley Water Quality Management Plan, there has been no decrease in the production of coal.

As a matter of fact, production has continued to increase, and will continue to increase in the foreseable future with the proposed Teck Castle Mountain expansion, Jameson Crown Mountain proposal, and North Coal Michel Coal Mine proposal.

MS. CLERGET: Your time is up.
MR. HANLON: I encourage Montana to set strong selenium -- as a proactive way of complying assurance downstream. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Ryland Nelson. (No response)

MS. CLERGET: Ryland Nelson.
(No response)
MS. CLERGET: John Bergenske again?
(No response)
MR. BERGENSKE: I've already spoken, so thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Sorry. I have you on my list twice. Tim Lenihan.

MR. LENIHAN: Thanks. Can you hear me?
MS. CLERGET: Yes.
MR. LENIHAN: Thank you very much. This
is Tim Lenihan. I'm an outfitter, flyfishing
outfitter on the Kootenai River, and also speaking for the Kootenai Valley Trout Unlimited Club. And just wanted to thank everyone for the participation, and appreciate everybody who has been involved.

Totally support the 0.8 standard, and very much hope that we set the standard today. The science is exhaustive. It's peer reviewed. There's no measurable effects on the Montanore Mine locally. There's no measurable effects on the other permits here in Montana. No effect on real estate. Doesn't seem that there's any down side to this at all.

The 0.8 standard will protect native fish, it will protect the resource. I hate to be grim, folks, but the Kootenai has cancer. This is an opportunity -- to reflect Director McGrath's opening statements -- this is an opportunity to be very much proactive. We can treat the cancer now.

Again, not to be grim. That's a horrible, horrible analogy, but that's the way it feels from where $I$ sit. This is how I make my living. We can treat this now, and be proactive, and not be reactive down the road. So let's adopt the standard. Thank you very much. And I
appreciate everybody who has been involved in this process. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Ryland Nelson.
MR. NELSON: Hi. My name is Ryland
Nelson. I'm from Fernie, long time local, owner of a large accommodation provider.

I am a strong proponent of getting this standard set at the recommended, science recommended level. I've been involved in this issue for twenty years, and not a lot has changed in these years. But what is needed to protect the aquatic life in these watersheds, the only thing that has changed is that the selenium levels have continued to go up, and Teck and the mining proponents have continued to delay, delay, delay.

So now is time for action, and
Canadians, and Elk Valley and Elk River users are strong proponents of this recommended -(inaudible) --

MS. CLERGET: Okay. Thank you. Let's remind everybody to please mute and turn off their cameras if you're done speaking. That's all I have for proponents. George, did I miss anybody on your list?

MR. MATHIEUS: Did you get Kendra

Norwood?
MS. CLERGET: I think so. Yes.
MR. MATHIEUS: No, $I$ think that's all the proponents on my list.

MS. CLERGET: Is there anyone else that wishes to speak that has not spoken yet as a proponent?

MR. AITKEN: Yes. Gary Aitken, Jr.,
Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, please.
MS. CLERGET: Thank you. You have a minute.

MR. AITKEN: Thank you Sarah, thank you Madam Chair, and the Board. I'm Gary Aitkin, Jr., Kootenai Tribe of Idaho Chairman.

Kootenai Tribe of Idaho is a member of Chanaka (phonetic) Nation, a nation that's been in this territory since time immemorial. Our story tells us that when we were put here, the Creator told us that as long as we took care of this land, it would take care of us forever, so it's very important to care of this land. The Kootenai River is a cultural resource to us, and it needs to be protected.

The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho works really hard on restoration of habitat, of fisheries, and
we need to take care of the resource. We love to take care of the resource for the benefit of Chanaka and non-Chanaka alike.

Water quality is getting worse because of the coal mining in $B C$ and its failure to address. And it's not just the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho. Every US Senator has also -- from Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Alaska, have signed a letter to $B C$ stating that enough is enough.

So we are in support of the site specific criteria of 0.8 , and hoping you'll hold their feet to the fire, and cleaning up this river and doing what we can to hold our covenant to our people, and to take care of everything that we are granted to by the Creator. I appreciate the time. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Anyone else who wishes to speak as a proponent?
(No response)
MS. CLERGET: Hearing none, Madam Chair, I think we're ready to move to opponents.

CHAIR DEVENY: Let's hear the opponents to those proposed rules. Go ahead, Sarah. Thank you for coordinating this.

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MS. CLERGET: First we have Vicki
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Marquis.
MS. MARQUIS: Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the Board. I'm Vicki Marquis representing Teck.

Teck does not believe that an additional public comment is appropriate prior to the Board's vote, since the public comment period has already ended. To ensure that we do not waive any arguments, we note that there are several inaccuracies presented today in the Board packet.

We stand by our written comments and previous oral testimony, and we reserve the right to object to any and all statements made today and in the Board packet, specifically in the responses to comments, including, but not limited to, statements indicating that the Water Policy Interim Committee did not object to this rulemaking, but which failed to note that a majority of the WPIC members submitted a letter to this Board specifically asking that the rule not be finalized at this time. That's in your Board packet at pages 343 to 344 .

I have a lot more to say. I do not have enough time. But Teck respectfully urges you to not finalize this proposed rule at this time.

Thank you.
MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Anne
Fairbrother.
MS. FAIRBROTHER: Yes. Good morning, Madam Chair, and members of the Board. I'm Dr. Anne Fairbrother, principal scientist with Exponent out of the Bellevue, Washington office.

I have several very serious technical concerns with the modeling effort that was done, most of which I've put into my written comments that are in your Board packet, but there are two that DEQ has not addressed that $I$ want to raise to your attention.

This is a definition of what is meant by steady state; and also a determination of which species need to be used for monitoring.

For steady state, we need to know how long concentrations must be stable, and how much natural variability is allowed in the definition. Also DEQ includes changing loadings in their definition of steady state, which also seems to include decreasing concentrations.

When the system is not in a steady state, but concentrations are decreasing, impairment should not be based on water values as
the accumulation will be decreasing, and the trophic transfer factors use to calculate the water values will be too high.

And the second point about which these seem to be used for --

MS. CLERGET: Your time is up, so please make it very short.

MS. FAIRBROTHER: Some fish just have really high concentrations naturally, and are not good sentinels for determining impaired versus unimpaired systems. The mountain whitefish, which was used by Idaho, is one of these. Thank you very much, and we appreciate your attention.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. That's all I have for opponents. Would anybody else like to speak as an opponent?
(No response)
MS. CLERGET: Hearing none, may I move on to neutral, Madam Chair?

CHAIR DEVENY: Yes, go ahead.
MS. CLERGET: John Kilpatrick from USGS.
MR. KILPATRICK: Thanks, Madam Chair and Board members, for the chance to comment. My name is John Kilpatrick. I'm Director of the US Geological Surveys and Water Science Center in

Montana.
USGS is a federal science agency that exists to provide unbiased natural resources information. More than a decade ago, the USGS developed an ecosystem scale selenium accumulation model. It was later used by EPA to develop the national selenium standards to protect aquatic life.

The model was derived from patterns broadly observed in ecosystems around the world, is wildly accepted by scientists and academia, industry, and government, and is the basis for the specific model developed for Lake Koocanusa.

The USGS took this widely accepted model, and enhanced it with site specific data. The model was subject to fundamental science practices of the USGS to ensure it was unbiased, objective, and impartial. The result is the best available science for the prediction of the state selenium concentrations in Lake Koocanusa.

The Lake Koocanusa model meets the USGS's high standards for science quality, and Montana DEQ's implementation of the model is consistent with the model's intended use. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: Thank you. Is there anyone else who wishes to speak?
(No response)
MS. CLERGET: Hearing none, Madam Chair, I believe that concludes the public comment.

CHAIR DEVENY: Thank you, Sarah, and thank you everybody for keeping your comments to one minute, and for your very thoughtful input.

With that, $I$ would like to go back to Board members, and open this up for discussion and questions by Board members of $D E Q$ and/or of any the presenters who spoke in favor or opposition to the rule.

BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: Madam Chair, this is Chris. I have a couple questions, and then a small handful of observations.

The first question goes to something that was touched on at our last meeting but not mentioned today, and $I$ think maybe one of the scientists might be appropriate to address this. George, $I$ don't know who on your staff is the right person for this question, but perhaps you can direct it where it needs to go.

At our last meeting, when we were discussing the question of whether we should
initiate rulemaking, the point was made, $I$ believe -- I think $I$ recall this correctly --- that the geology that exists on the Montana side of the border makes it highly unlikely, I guess, that activity, commercial activity on this side of the border would trigger releases that would drive the selenium values in the lake and the lower part of river in Montana above the standards. Do I have this right?

CHAIR DEVENY: George, go ahead.
MR. MATHIEUS: Madam Chair, this is
George Mathieus. I'll pass that question to Myla Kelly.

MS. KELLY: Board Member Tweeten, that is correct. There is substantially different geology in the Elk Valley than in Lincoln County or in Montana.

BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: Okay. Thank you. My second question $I$ think maybe Director McGrath or Tim Davis might be the appropriate person to speak to this.

If you could remind us how the adoption of a standard like this on this side of the border can affect commercial mining activity in British Columbia. They are upstream. We have no
sovereign jurisdiction to control what they do in British Columbia.

I'm just curious, because Teck operates in $B C$. I don't believe they mine in the drainage that's involved in this matter in Montana. So I'm just curious as to how this standard in Montana affects what Teck is able to do in BC.

DIRECTOR MCGRATH: Madam Chair and Board Member Tweeten, I'll take a shot at answering that, and then may also defer to Tim Davis if he wants to weigh in.

Two things that $I$ would say, Board Member Tweeten. First off is that this issue has come up a number of times over the last couple months, you know, how does this impact enforcement over in British Columbia, and you're right. DEQ cannot enforce our standard on Teck Coal.

But as Ayn Schmit from EPA spoke to in her brief comments here today, and has said also, Montana standard does empower our Federal government to work with Canada to make sure that water that's coming out of Canada into Montana meets our standards. So without a standard in place, that conversation is not going to happen. That's the first thing.

The second thing is we have been coordinating with British Columbia with our counterparts in the Administrative Environment Climate Change, to try to align our standards, and ideally what we want to get to is that British Columbia and Montana have aligned standards, which then puts British Columbia in the place of being able to enforce their standard, which by way of having an aligned standard would also be protective for Montana.

By us adopting this standard today, what that does is continue to put the pressure on British Columbia to indeed adopt their own standard that is aligned with us.

Tim, anything else that $I$ missed that you might add?

MR. DAVIS: No, Madam Chair, members of the Board. No, $I$ think you hit on the two main things that $I$ would have brought up, Director.

CHAIR DEVENY: Chris, does that answer your questions?

BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: It does. And Madam Chair, just a couple of observations, I guess.

One, the question of whether it's
premature to be addressing this standard question when there doesn't appear to be any sort of environment calamity going on in the lake with respect to fish species -- we don't have massive fish kills or anything like this.

I'm reminded of something that the Montana Supreme Court said many years ago in discussing the constitutional provision in our Constitution regarding the right of every citizen to a clean and healthful environment, and the Court observed that it's not necessary for us to wait until all of the fish in the river are dead, or all of the birds have died, or all the wildife habitat has been destroyed before we take action, that the clean healthful environment imperative in the Montana Constitution is very much forward looking and proactive.

So I believe consistent with what the Court has observed, that taking steps before widespread environmental damage has happened on the Montana side of the border can be entirely appropriate.

And second, with respect to the suggestion that it would be more appropriate to put this matter off, the unspoken, if not spoken,
assumption with respect to that suggestion rests in part $I$ think on the fact that we've had an election, a new Administration is coming in in January, and perhaps the views of that Administration's Department of Environmental Quality ought to take precedence over that which has been expressed by DEQ under the present Administration.

And we only have one Administration at a time under our Constitution, and $I$ think the question is not so much where the political chips are going to fall in January. The question is whether the matter has been rigorously reviewed, whether a sufficient period of time has been taken to conduct the scientific reviews that need to be done, and whether we as a board are persuaded that the scientific work that's been done in fact supports $D E Q^{\prime} s$ recommendation.

If we think under those considerations that this matter is ripe for us to address today, I see no reason why we ought to delay, and in my estimation, $I$ think I'm impressed by the scientific work that has been done; and by the fact that with the exception of the industry representatives, scientists are in agreement with
respect to the range in which this standard ought to lie; the fact that the principal objector Teck is not even subject to this standard, which in my mind undercuts the weight of their objections considerably.

And all those together $I$ think lead me to the conclusion that $I$ think it's entirely appropriate for us to go forward at this meeting. There's no compelling reason to delay. So I think as I said, it's entirely appropriate for us to go ahead and consider this rule and decide what we want to do without any further delay.

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: This is Jerry
Lynch.
CHAIR DEVENY: Board Member Lynch. I appreciate your input, questions, comments.

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: I agree with the statements made by Board Member Tweeten. To me, time is of the essence. I think that's particularly true from the viewpoint of the burbot and the white sturgeon.

I do want to make a statement in
response to the suggestion by the Teck representative, with due respect. I want to make clear that $I$ do not take into consideration in
making my decision the comments that were made today.

I do that to avoid any suggestion that my decision is based upon information that goes beyond the administrative record. I understand the purpose of this -- not a hearing -- but this opportunity for people to comment, but $I$ want to make absolutely clear my decision is based upon the administrative record as developed.

I do for my own edification, however, have one basic question, and $I$ think probably directed to either Ms. Kelly or Mr. McGrath, and it is this:

We know that the proposed standard is of 0.8. We've heard talk about the British Columbia standards. I just want to make clear that the Montana standard is -- I think Mr. McGrath used the term "aligned with the standards of British Columbia," so that Montana's not some sort of outlier in this process.

And the same question with regard to the standards in Idaho, that the proposed site specific standard we're discussing here today is in fact aligned with or in other words consistent with both the upstream standards and the
downstream standards.
DIRECTOR MCGRATH: I can take a shot at that, Madam Chair and Board Member Lynch, but Myla, please jump in.

So first with Idaho, they've adopted the 3.1, which is for the Kootenai River, and that is consistent with our standard that's proposed here for the main stem of the Kootenai.

With regard to British Columbia, so their process got delayed. They had a snap election back $I$ think it was September or so, and it took them a couple of months to get their new government stood up.

And so they have not formally proposed their, what they call objective -- it's not a standard. They call it an objective. That hasn't been done yet, so we don't know what they're going to ultimately propose or adopt at this point.

At the same time, having gone through this process with them over the last number of years, and developing that scientific base, we know that what they ultimately will pursue will be based on that same body of information. Of course, they'll go out and potentially gather additional information, so $I$ don't want to suggest
that they're going -- what they might adopt, but certainly at this point, the process has been aligned.

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Does Canada itself have a national standard or criterion similar to the United States EPA?

DIRECTOR MCGRATH: Myla, do you know the answer to that?

MS. KELLY: Yes, $I$ do know the answer to that. They have a water column objective of two micrograms per liter, and they also have fish tissue objectives that are more stringent than ours. It's eleven micrograms per liter for egg/ovary, and four for muscle and whole body.

The only thing $I$ would add is that our fish tissue standards for the Kootenai River will also be aligned to Idaho's fish tissue standards, so both the water column and the fish tissue.

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: So the Idaho standard -- because we did hear statements about the, quote, "load" coming from Montana into Idaho, so Idaho standards are aligned with or the same as the proposed standard?

MS. KELLY: That's correct.
BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: All right. Thank
you. The final comment $I$ have, Madam Chair, is that $I$ also want to agree with Board Member Tweeten's comment that the objections here made by Teck, they're not operating in Montana. So really the quality of water that we want in Montana, Teck in my opinion has no say in the issue. Thank you.

CHAIR DEVENY: Thank you, Board Member
Lynch. To other Board members -- I see John DeArment has his hand up, and then Dexter, $I$ think you're going to want to make some comments, too. But we'll go ahead with John.

BOARD MEMBER DeARMENT: Thank you, Madam
Chair. I agree with Board Members Tweeten and Lynch. I think there's ample evidence in the administrative record to demonstrate that the proposed site specific standards are very much needed at this time, that the process that developed was conclusive, transparent, and of sufficient length, and that the science behind the standard is robust and world class.

I see no legitimate reason for further delay, and when you think the time is right, I'm very much prepared to introduce a motion that the Board adopt the site specific standards for both the lake and the river. Thank you.

CHAIR DEVENY: Thank you, Board Member DeArment. Dexter Busby, did you have some comments?

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: I had a couple of questions, but $I$ could not understand what John was saying.

CHAIR DEVENY: We had some problems with John's information, but $I$ think -- Laurie, did you get John's testimony? Maybe you could read that back real quick.
(Whereupon, Board Member DeArment's comment was read back)

CHAIR DEVENY: So Dexter, with that, did you have some questions then of --

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: I did. I spent the last three nights reading all the comments that came back. There was some interesting things that came out.

Essentially there's quite of bit of conflict between what the State's data was and what several others supplied in the comments, and the State did not, in my view, adequately answer those questions in their response to comments. That being said, is the Director still on, Director McGrath?

DIRECTOR MCGRATH: Yes, I am on.
BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: One of the comments that was made by one of the legislators on the WPIC committee thought that you had misled the committee in your discussion of the sediments in the bottom of Lake Koocanusa. Would you address that.

DIRECTOR MCGRATH: Of course. And thank you for the question. Madam Chair.

So the question that was raised, first I mean it's probably worth noting that it was a fairly complicated question with five or six different topics raised at once. What $I$ responded to were two things: One, the question of does the dam, Libby Dam, have an impact; and then secondly, if we don't adopt a standard, this standard, will there be a continued accumulation of selenium, increased accumulation.

What $I$ said was yes, the dam does have an impact, and that is why we have the two different standards --1.8 for the dam, because in waters that aren't moving, the uptake is different than in a river system where the water is flowing, where the proposal is 3.1.

Secondly, by pointing out the addition
of new mines and expanded mines in the $E l k$ River, that we could anticipate that there could be additional accumulation going forward if we don't adopt a more protective standard.

Now, where there seems to be some debate around what $I$ said is with regard to sedimentation. And there was a study -- and all of this is laid out in our response to comments -but there was a study in 2013 that did show that there was some increase of sedimentation at the dam, and not in other areas on the banks or closer to where the water comes in over the border, which would suggest that there might be additional sedimentation.

That was not conclusive, however, and $I$ want to make sure that $I$ 'm clear in saying that. I mean that was the one study, and we haven't done more to really be able to definitively say will there be increased sedimentation. But I don't think anyone doubts that there will be an increase in accumulation.

And the uptake from selenium in the water column is really what is very important here, what we've seen. That's where particularly in fish species that uptake occurs.

CHAIR DEVENY: Dexter, does that answer your question?

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: Yeah, I don't think it answers it completely, but $I$ think that's the best you can do at the time, so I'm not going to quibble with the answer at all.

The second thing is $I$, too, am very concerned about Montana passing a standard that has only effect on Montana, and Montana businesses, and any activities around the river or the lake, but practically has no effect on the actual admitters in Canada.

We can talk all we want, but they're an independent nation, and $B C$ is an independent province of that nation, and these guys do what they want to do, not what we tell them what to do. And we can make all sorts of promises, but the fact of the matter is they do what they do, and we do what we do, but we're not going to have any effect on what they do.

The second thing is $I$ saw no comments from DEQ, but $I$ saw several comments on the potential economic impacts, and I'd like DEQ to talk about what potential costs they see to the state, and to businesses, and anybody wanting a
water permit that this might have, a water discharge permit, that this might have on those folks.

CHAIR DEVENY: I believe there was an economic analysis that was performed, and I'll ask somebody from DEQ to please address Mr. Busby's question.

DIRECTOR MCGRATH: Madam Chair, if I might, I'd like to defer that to Tim Davis.

MR. DAVIS: Madam Chair, members of the Board, Board Member Busby. There was a small -We did conduct, as required by law, a small business impact assessment. That assessment did look at the --

CHAIR DEVENY: Tim, you're breaking up. Can you start over.

MR. DAVIS: Madam Chair, Board members, Board Member Busby, this is Tim Davis, Water Quality Division Administrator at DEQ.

So the Department did a conduct a small business impact analysis, and that is included with the Board packet. That analysis, we looked at not only individual dischargers, but also public wastewater systems that could potentially be affected by the new standard.

We found that none of those systems have a reasonable potential to exceed the selenium standard as proposed. Therefore they would not have new or additional treatment costs as a result of the adoption of the standard. They would not have selenium effluent limits applied to their permits going forward.

We also, as an example, and one of the reasons for that is, as we've talked about, the difference in geology. And the Montanore Mine is a good example of the lack of impact on the economy inside Montana for two reasons:
"A," even if they had selenium in their ore -- which they have not found selenium to be in their ore -- they are not on the main stem of the Kootenai River, nor are they on Lake Koocanusa, so the standard, the new standards would not apply to them; but even if they were, they do not have selenium in their ore.

And we -- as Lauren also pointed out, in the response to comments points out -- we do not have detection levels of selenium coming in, except in one instance from tributaries in Montana. So that backs up the finding that there's unlikely to be an impact, an economic
impact in Montana as a result of the adoption of the new standard, if you should choose to go forward.

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: Thank you, Tim. The one other comment -- I think my other comments were addressed by Mr. Tweeten and Mr. Lynch -- but my only other comment is we had written comments from the County Commission and other legislators in the area, and they were all negative to this. I was wondering if you had any thoughts on that, Tim. For Tim Davis. Excuse me. I'm sorry.

CHAIR DEVENY: Tim, go ahead.
MR. DAVIS: Madam Chair, Board Member Busby. We have had three different meetings with local stakeholders and local officials to address their concerns and comments. I think you'll note that in the response to comments, there are very specific responses to the individual comments that were raised by local officials, and $I$ believe that from our perspective, they address their specific comments related to process, as well as the science.

But we did have, since August, we've had three different meetings with local stakeholders and officials to make sure that they understood
what was in the science, to answer their questions, and to address their concerns.

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: Thank You, Tim. Just a quick comment that $I$ want the Board to know I'm very sensitive to legislator comments and County Commission comments, so $I$ pay very, very close attention to what these folks have to say. That's all $I$ have. Thank you.

CHAIR DEVENY: Thank You, Dexter. Does Board Member David Lehnherr have any questions or comments?

BOARD MEMBER LEHNHERR: Thanks, Madam Chair. I appreciate and concur with many of the comments made previously by other Board members. I would like to make some comments, but $I$ think $I$ would like to save them for a discussion after a motion has been made.

CHAIR DEVENY: Okay. All right.
BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Madam Chair, this is Board Member Lynch. I appreciate Dexter's comments. I do think that the enforcement is an issue, Montana versus British Columbia.

However, $I$ just think we don't want to sink to the lowest common denominator. I think we want to maintain as best we can the pristine
nature of the waters in this system, and at the end of the day, $I$ think that may prove to be more economically viable than allowing a higher selenium standard. Thank you.

BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: Madam Chair.
CHAIR DEVENY: Yes. Board Member
Tweeten.
BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: If I might. Like Dexter, I'm sensitive to the interest in this process that is expressed by the local elected officials.

But my concern -- if you recall, at last meeting, $I$ expressed a concern that the $D E Q$ make sure that it had touched base with all of the local government officials that expressed an interest in this process.

My concern was process driven. Nothing derails a proceeding of any kind faster than a suggestion that someone wasn't given the opportunity to give input, and $I$ don't believe that the local officials now can make that claim. I think they can certainly complain that their suggestions weren't taken, but $I$ don't think they can any longer claim that they weren't listened to.

And for me, you either believe the science or you don't. I will be making my decision based on the science that's been explained by $D E Q$, and not on any other factors. So for me, I think we've satisfied our obligation to meet the needs of local officials to provide input into this decision.

And as $I$ say for me, as a voting member of the Board, my decision is going to be based on where the facts are, and it's going to be science driven.

CHAIR DEVENY: Thank You, Board Member Tweeten.

I just want to comment on behalf of myself. I waded through the very extensive hearing record, and was very much persuaded by the fact that Lake Koocanusa and the Kootenai River need a very site specific selenium standard because currently the current standard is not protective of aquatic life, and we have evidence that there is reproductive harm occurring.

Also $I$ was very much impressed by the very, very solid science that was used using peer reviewed methods and EPA approved methods, and that DEQ I believe did some outstanding
stakeholder and public outreach for the rulemaking process.

It was extensive in its use of a very technical committee that was made up of top selenium experts, and the rulemaking effort that they followed met the requirements of MAPA, State and Federal Clean Water statutes, and frankly went beyond that.

Also something that hasn't been mentioned today, or if it was $I$ missed it, but there is a three year review period in place for all of our water quality rules, including this one, so if we're running into issues that this isn't going the right way, there is that review process that occurs every three years.

And lastly, $I$ believe that the rule adoption places Montana in a very proactive and protective position with respect to our neighbors in Idaho and in Canada, and $I$ am going to be in full support of the adoption of this rule.

With that, do any Board members have any further questions or comments before we proceed with any motion action?

Dexter, is your phone on? Are you
trying to say something?

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: No. My phone is on. I do have one small comment to make, though. CHAIR DEVENY: Go ahead.

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: I think $I$ probably will support the elected officials from the area, because I'm not sure their questions and their concerns have been waylaid in any way by the data that's been presented. So personally I'm going to support that, along with the idea it can't be enforced. I spoke last time that $I$ don't like regulations that are for regulation only, and can't be enforced, so I'm probably not going to support this.

CHAIR DEVENY: Duly noted, Dexter. Thank you.

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Madam Chair, Board Member Lynch. I don't want to step out of bounds. I would think given the nature of this vote we're about to take, it may be appropriate, if you will, to ask each member individually how they wish to vote, rather than a yea or nay, if you're in agreement with that.

CHAIR DEVENY: I think that's a good
idea. We will take a voice vote when we're ready. David Lehnherr, did you have a question?

I could finally see you. You weren't on my screen before, so $I$ hope $I$ didn't miss times when you wanted to speak up. I think you're muted, David. BOARD MEMBER LEHNHERR: There we go. Thank you. I do think it would be appropriate to have a motion before we -- I mean in general it's a good idea to have a motion, so we know what we're discussing. It might be a good idea to get a motion at this point, and then $I$ will add a few comments.

CHAIR DEVENY: Okay. I think you're right. I think we're getting ready for one. I know that John DeArment had indicated that he was ready to make a motion.

BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: Madam Chair.
CHAIR DEVENY: But Chris, did you
have --
BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: I will defer to John.

CHAIR DEVENY: John, before you make the motion, just so we don't have to clean it up. I just want to mention that the takings, the stringency and the takings language was provided in the Board packet a little late, but it is on there, and when you do make the motion one way or
another, if you could also address whether or not that includes adopting the House Bill 521 stringency and 311 takings analysis.

BOARD MEMBER DeARMENT: Okay. Madam Chair, can you hear me well enough this time for me to do this?

CHAIR DEVENY: Yes. That's much better.
BOARD MEMBER DeARMENT: Before I
introduce the motion, $I$ do want to do one more thing, which is acknowledge the hard work that the Department did for this. I have been involved with DEQ for probably the better part of twenty years, and it seems to me these rules and the process that created them is the Department at its very best.

So thanks everybody who worked on this within the Department. Your work really matters, and $I$ think you have a lot to be proud of today.

So I'm happy to introduce a motion for the Board to adopt the site specific selenium rules for Lake Koocanusa and the Kootenai River, along with the stringency and takings measures from House Bills 521 and 311.

CHAIR DEVENY: There's a motion before us, and I'd be happy to second that. With that,
is there further Board discussion? Chris Tweeten. BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: Thank you. Just to clarify. I believe the Department, based on public comment, has suggested some I think relatively small amendments to the rules that were originally proposed; am $I$ correct about that?

CHAIR DEVENY: Yes, the recommendation does include amendments to ARM 17.30.602.

BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: And John, I'm just clarifying that your motion is to adopt the proposed rules as amended following the rulemaking hearing.

BOARD MEMBER DeARMENT: Madam Chair, Board Member Tweeten. Yes. Thank you for the clarification and the assistance. I appreciate it. That is my intention indeed.

CHAIR DEVENY: Thank you, Chris, for pointing that out. David, did I see you had something to say?

BOARD MEMBER LEHNHERR: Yes. Can you hear me?

CHAIR DEVENY: Yes.
BOARD MEMBER LEHNHERR: Thank you, Madam
Chair. I just wanted to make a few comments.
I do think the DEQ did a great job.

There have been comments about possible economic impacts, and the economic impacts can have multiple facets.

I think it's important to remember the economic benefit of people that are using the rivers and the lake in Canada, and Montana, and Idaho, and the benefits to tourism and recreation is when you have unimpaired waterways. And local elected officials have been mentioned, but we've also heard from many local unelected residents who demonstrated great concern for the waterways, and the lake.

I think we ignore the consensus of dozens of highly qualified scientists at our peril. There have been comments regarding why we are, quote, "rushing," unquote, to have the standards put in place, when the other side of the coin may be -- and this has been brought up before -- why wasn't this done sooner?

As a medical professional, $I$ can tell you that an ounce of prevention is truly worth a pound of cure, and certainly we've seen the consequences around the state of not being proactive, and ending up with impaired waterways and impaired landscapes.

And $I$ think what has been done by the DEQ with this proposal is to take reasonable, scientifically sound proactive steps to keep impairment from occurring. Thank you.

CHAIR DEVENY: Thank you, David. Are there any other comments that Board members would like before we take a vote on this question?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, let's have a role call vote on this, and if it's not inappropriate I'll just do the roll call given the nature of this. So Board Member John DeArment, signify if you're in favor or opposed to the proposed motion.

BOARD MEMBER DeARMENT: Madam Chair, I am in favor.

CHAIR DEVENY: Board Member Dexter Busby, please signify whether you're in favor or opposed to the proposed motion.

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: I oppose the motion.

CHAIR DEVENY: I'm Board Member Chris Deveny. I am in favor of this motion and approve it. Board Member David Lehnherr.

BOARD MEMBER LEHNHERR: I am in favor.

CHAIR DEVENY: Board Member Jerry Lynch. BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: I am in favor. CHAIR DEVENY: Board Member Chris

Tweeten.
BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: I'm in favor.
CHAIR DEVENY: The motion carries five to one. I wish to thank DEQ and everybody who attended today. And Board members, please do not leave because we still have more work on our agenda today.

So with that, it concludes this action item. Sarah, is there anything else that needs to be done with regards to this?

MS. CLERGET: No. I think Laurie might need a break, though.

CHAIR DEVENY: So it's ten after noon. We have a few items on the agenda. I don't think they will take a long period of time. Would people be willing to work through the lunch hour if we take a ten minute break now? Board members, are you amenable to working through the lunch hour? I'm thinking maybe a half hour or less. Sarah, do you have a --

MS. CLERGET: I think that's right.
BOARD MEMBER DEARMENT: Fine with me,

Madam Chair.
BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: Me, too.
BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Fine with me.
BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: I'm okay.
CHAIR DEVENY: Okay. Great. Well,
let's take a ten minute break. It's about twelve after. Let's come back in ten minutes and then we'll wrap up our meeting.
(Recess taken)
CHAIR DEVENY: Would you take roll call, please, Joyce.

MS. WITTENBERG: Yes. Chair Deveny.
CHAIR DEVENY: Present.
MS. WITTENBERG: John DeArment.
BOARD MEMBER DeARMENT: Here.
MS. WITtenberg: Dexter Busby.
BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: Here.
MS. WITTENBERG: David Lehnherr.
BOARD MEMBER LEHNHERR: Here.
MS. WITtenberg: Jerry Lynch.
BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Here.
MS. WITTENBERG: Chris Tweeten.
BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: Here.
MS. WITTENBERG: We have a quorum.
CHAIR DEVENY: Okay. The Board is all
back with a quorum, and let's move into new contested cases. Sarah, would you like to do the introductions.

MS. CLERGET: You have your standard menu of options here. You can retain all jurisdiction; you can assign jurisdiction to a Hearing Examiner for procedural purposes only, which means that if there are, for example, motions for summary judgment or other dispositive motions, you will have those, and then the final hearing you'll hear yourself; or you can assign it to a Hearing Examiner for all purposes, in which case it will not come back to you until final disposition. So those are your three options you have.

The first case is Western Sugar
Cooperative. The material is in your packet. You have to decide what your pleasure is with regard to that new case.

CHAIR DEVENY: Okay. Thank you, Sarah.
So on Western Sugar Cooperative, $I$ would make a motion to assign the case to Agency Legal Services' attorneys for all procedural and substantive matters.

BOARD MEMBER LEHNHERR: I will second
that motion.
CHAIR DEVENY: It's been moved and seconded. Is there any discussion?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Board members all in favor of the motion, please signify by saying aye.
(Response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Any opposed?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, the motion passes, and we'll move on to the next case.

MS. CLERGET: The next one is the same menu of options, and this one is by Westmoreland regarding a notice of violation.

CHAIR DEVENY: I will go ahead and just make the motion to assign the case to the Agency Legal Services' attorneys for all procedural and substantive matters, and is there a second?

BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: This is Chris. I'll second.

CHAIR DEVENY: It's been seconded by Chris Tweeten. Any discussion?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.
(Response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Any opposed?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, that motion passes. Moving on now to action on contested cases. This is in regards to the City of Great Falls MPDES permit. Sarah, go ahead.

MS. CLERGET: Yes. On this, it's another stipulation like you've had. You've had a few of these now in front of you. This is essentially a settlement that the parties have reached, and this has been a lot of work on their part, and $I$ think they should be commended for getting to this point. There was a lot of different moving pieces.

So this order that is a proposed order that's in front of you represents a stipulation of all the parties that this is the appropriate resolution for this case, and they're asking for you to approve it. And that is in your materials. I apologize. I don't have the page numbers right in front of me.

So that is your decision. You can adopt it, you can modify it, you can reject it. I know the parties are here. Well, you can't modify it.

You can reject it or adopt it. I apologize. If you want to modify it, you have to send it back to the parties and see if they can all agree. The parties are here if you have any questions.

CHAIR DEVENY: Do Board members have any questions of the parties? Chris.
(No response)
BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: If I recall correctly, $I$ think Vicki Marquis said she might have some comment to make with respect to this matter. I don't know if that is accurate, or she's just here to answer questions, but I'd like to find out if she has anything to say about this.

CHAIR DEVENY: Ms. Marquis, would you like to say anything about this case?

MS. MARQUIS: Thank you, Madam Chair, Board Member Tweeten. Yes, I'm mostly here to answer questions, but $I$ will offer that the City of Great Falls and DEQ have been working a lot on resolving their issues. That's reflected in the stipulation.

There is one issue outstanding which we're currently working to resolve, and we feel we'll be able to reach resolution on that as well. But to capture the settlement, we wanted to put
this in front of the Board, and get the issues resolved that we have agreement on today. So thank you for your time and attention on this. I appreciate it.

CHAIR DEVENY: Thank you. And does DEQ have any comments to make?

MR. MOSER: Madam Chair, members of the Board. We don't have any specific comments to make, other than we would say that this stipulation would resolve most of the issues, and obviously we have reached an agreement with the City of Great Falls on that.

And there is one issue that is outstanding, and we'd have to, based on the terms of this, we would have to submit a joint status report to the Hearing Examiner by January 6 th to continue discussions about that.

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Madam Chair, this
is Board Member Lynch. Just for my own edification, what is the outstanding issue?

MR. MOSER: It involves around effluent limits for diethylhexylphthalate or DEHP.

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Okay. Is that a principal issue in the dispute or minor issue?

MR. MOSER: I guess it was -- I mean it
was one of the five appeal issues noted in the Notice of Appeal, so I guess it would be considered a principal issue.

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: All right. Thank you.

CHAIR DEVENY: Are there any other questions or comments from Board members?

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: This is Dexter, and actually it's for Sarah. If we approve this now, doesn't it make the next one null and void, or what's the status of that if we approve that now?

MS. CLERGET: It's exactly like -- You did this in another case -- and I apologize. I can't remember which one. I think it might have been CHS. Vicki probably remembers better than me -- where we resolved a piece of the case, and then the parties continued to work, and in that case were successful and came back a second time with the second piece resolved; or we can -- if they can't reach a settlement on that second piece, then we can go on with a hearing on just that one remaining piece. But no, it does not make the rest of it void. It just relates to these issues in the Notice of Appeal.

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: Okay. So four out
of five will be settled with this?
MS. CLERGET: Yes.
BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: Okay. Thank you.
CHAIR DEVENY: So any further questions or discussion before we move on? Would anybody like to make a motion to approve or reject the stipulation.

BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: Madam Chair, it's
Chris. I will move to approve the stipulation.
BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Madam Chair, I'll
second. This is Board Member Lynch.
CHAIR DEVENY: It's been moved and seconded. Is there any further discussion on the motion?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, all those in favor of the motion to approve the stipulation for the final agency decision regarding the permit for the City of Great Falls, please signify by saying aye.
(Response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Any opposed?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, the motion passes. Thank you, everyone. With that, Sarah do
you have a Board Counsel update for us?
MS. CLERGET: I do not.
CHAIR DEVENY: Moving right along, we have an opportunity for general public comment on any matters that have not been on the agenda for the meeting. Is there any comment from any members of the public?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, before we adjourn, I'd just like to mention that there will be a change, likely a change in Board membership in 2021, as four of our current Board positions expire at the end of December.

Just a reminder that these positions remain active until they are replaced with appointees, so if the replacements are not made before the scheduled February meeting, all the members will be expected to continue to carry on their work of this Board.

Anticipating that there are going to be new replacements, I'd like to really take this time to wholeheartedly thank all of you Board members for your diligence and good work over the years, and it's been a real pleasure to serve with you.

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: May I make a statement or ask Chris a question?

CHAIR DEVENY: Yes. Go ahead.
BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Chris, I know you're familiar with this, but $I$ was appointed interim, as you know. And then $I$ received a letter from the Governor-Elect and his staff that interim position, my interim position, was going to be reopened, and suggesting that $I$ need send a new application to the Governor-Elect and his staff.

And maybe you're familiar with this, but it's raised a bit of a legal issue in terms of past practice, that if the Governor appoints interim people, then it's a matter for the Senate to address and not a renomination. And $I$ just want to make everybody on the Board aware of that.

It's come to a head on the -- I'm on the Board of Public Education. It's come to a head, so to speak, on the Board of Public Education because myself and one other individual were interim appointments. And it appears a bit of a purge. But what's your history with that, Chris? CHAIR DEVENY: My history -- and I'll probably ask Chris Tweeten, because he has a much
longer history than $I$ do -- but was that previous Board members continued to serve until they were replaced.

BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: Madam Chair.
BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: The question to -Well, Chris, go ahead. I'm talking about my appointment was until 2023, but it appears that may not happen. But that would have to be a matter, my understanding based upon what I've learned from discussions with the Board of Education issue, is that that's a matter for the Senate to deal with.

CHAIR DEVENY: That's right. Senate confirmation occurs when the Legislature meets, and so my experience is that the Board members serve until the Senate either approved or rejected them.

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Chris Tweeten.
BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: Madam Chair, if I might. My understanding of the law in this area is that if a person is appointed to a position with a specific term as opposed to an open ended appointment, that that person serves until that specific term ends, and that absent good cause, the Governor does not have the authority to remove
that person from the position.
Jerry, $I$ don't know if that's consistent with your understanding as well, but --

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Chris, that's consistent with my understanding, and it's consistent with the Board of Public Education's attorney Catherine Orr, who you're familiar with. The Governor doesn't seem to be taking that approach. He's requiring that we resubmit an application, and a resume, etc.

So I do understand -- It's my view that he doesn't have the authority to do that, but then as a pragmatist, $I$ understand that the Senate can simply not move you forward.

BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: So if you're not confirmed, then the incoming Administration will make another interim appointment to fill the remainder of that term, and --

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Well, the
disturbing thing is it seems, from everybody I've talked to, is inconsistent with past practice forever. But all things change, right? BOARD MEMBER TWEETEN: They certainly do.

Madam Chair, if I might be allowed a
point of personal privilege. I just want to echo your comments regarding my service on the Board. My term ends at the end of this month. I've informed the Governor's Office that $I$ don't intend to apply for reappointment to a position on the Board, so my service will end when my successor is appointed and qualified.

So this may very well be my last meeting. I don't know how fast they're going to get around to making those appointments, but I wouldn't be surprised if I'm not around for the February meeting.

In any event, it's been a pleasure to work with the Board members that I've worked with, and certainly the members of the staff at DEQ, who I think have done remarkable work in support of what the Board has been doing.

I also want to throw out a thank you to the private parties who have appeared before us. I think in most cases their presentations have been well thought out, and carefully prepared, and very helpful, even in those situations when we haven't necessarily gone along with what the private parties have asked us to do, so I want to thank them for their good work as well. And I
want to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: Likewise.
CHAIR DEVENY: Thank you. I'd also like to thank Sarah for her good work in support of the Board over the years. I know she's been very patient with me as the Chair in the most effective way that $I$ could be. And also thanks to DEQ staff, and all of you. Dr. Lehnherr. David.

BOARD MEMBER LEHNHERR: Yes, Madam
Chair. I just wanted to say that $I$ don't know who will be here at the next meeting, but $I$ certainly am appreciative of all of the Board members, the BER staff, the DEQ staff, and I've learned an incredible amount. But $I$ think what I've seen speaks very highly of a process in Montana, and very highly of many citizens in Montana. It's heartening. Thank you.

BOARD MEMBER LYNCH: A final comment from me, too. I want to thank Sarah. You do excellent work. You seem to be overburdened, but you do an excellent job. And I've only been with you folks a short period of time, but your dedication is admirable.

And $I$ cannot as a former scientist
express enough thanks to the Department of Environmental Quality. I think they do an absolutely excellent job. Thanks.

CHAIR DEVENY: Any other comments from Board members?

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: Yes, I think that leaves me, and I've worked with you, Chris, for I think the last three years, if $I$ remember correctly.

CHAIR DEVENY: Yes, $I$ believe it's four.
BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: I would like to thank you for indulging me as much as you have.

And Chris, we go back a long ways in a different world, so it's good to work with you again, and too bad you aren't planning on coming back. I suspect $I$ won't be coming back because my term is also up at the end of month theoretically. Anyway, $D E Q$, and Sarah particularly, has been just yeoman work continuously, and I'd just like to thank you all for that. Thank you. And Merry Christmas.

BOARD MEMBER DeARMENT: I think actually that leaves me, Madam Chair, so I'll just say same here. It's been a real pleasure to serve with you all. Madam Chair, I appreciate your leadership as

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 Chair, and great work to the Department, and just it's been a great experience. Thanks, everybody. CHAIR DEVENY: Thank you all. It looks like I'm seeing a wave here. George.MR. MATHIEUS: Thank you, Madam Chair.
Just thanks for the compliments. There was a question on who is going to be here at the next meeting. I will be. But great working with everyone. Thanks. I appreciate it. And have a Merry Christmas.

CHAIR DEVENY: Thanks, George, and thank you, Laurie. With that, $I$ would move to adjourn this meeting of the BER.

BOARD MEMBER BUSBY: I'd second that. CHAIR DEVENY: It's been moved and seconded. Any further discussion?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, all those in favor of adjournment, please signify by saying aye.
(Response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Any opposed?
(No response)
CHAIR DEVENY: Meeting is adjourned.
(The proceedings were concluded at 12:39 p.m. )
$\begin{array}{lllllllllll}C & E & R & T & I & F & I & C & A & T & E\end{array}$
STATE OF MONTANA )
: SS.

COUNTY OF LEWIS \& CLARK )

I, LAURIE CRUTCHER, RPR, Court Reporter, Notary Public in and for the County of Lewis \& Clark, State of Montana, do hereby certify:

That the proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein named; that the proceedings were reported by me in shorthand and transcribed using computer-aided transcription, and that the foregoing - 150 - pages contain a true record of the proceedings to the best of my ability.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my notarial seal this $15 t h$ day of December, 2020 .

LAURIE CRUTCHER, RPR
Court Reporter - Notary Public
My commission expires
March 9, 2024.
$152$


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