



Office of the Water Engineer

Position Description: Water Resources Specialist II

Employee Name	Amanda Berens
Job Title	Water Resource Specialist
Date	2025-02-19
Job Level(s) Being Hired	Level II
Immediate Supervisor	Water Engineer
Position Type	Full-Time 40 hours/week
Classification	Exempt from FLSA
Schedule	Flex, focused on Mon-Thu 8:15-5:45 (likely to change when office switches to five days/week)
Duty Station	Office of the Water Engineer Primary: Ronan, Montana Occasional Remote Work Possible
Pay	<i>Set Forth in Offer Letter</i>
Project Assignments	OE Water Rights Records Manager OE WRIS Lead OE Hearings/Complaints Clerk
Requirements	Must be able and authorized to work in the United States
	Must hold a valid driver's license
	Must pass a background check

Position Overview:

The Water Resource Specialist is responsible for performing a broad variety of duties associated with managing water resources within the Flathead Indian Reservation under the direction of the Water Engineer, Board and the Unitary Administration and Management Ordinance (“Ordinance”) of the Water Compact between the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (Tribes), the State of Montana, and the Federal Government. The Specialist works closely with the Office of the Engineer’s staff, the Tribes’ water resources staff, the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) Water Resource Division, the Flathead Indian Irrigation Project (FIIP), and the citizens

and water uses on the Flathead Indian Reservation (FIR). The Specialist serves as a trusted expert for the public trust and is expected to provide thoughtful, informed, and accurate information and recommendations. The Specialist routinely writes technical documents, directly interacts with the public and partners, analyses technical information, discovers historic documents that inform work, reviews and improves digital and physical map products, and thinks on their feet to solve range of complex problems, not all of which relate directly to water.

This position is structured to promote through the Projects Assignments set forth above and described later in the PD. Upon completion of orientation as a Water Resources Specialist II and earnest initiation of engaging with Project Assignments, the position may have opportunity to develop a formal Promotion Plan that includes adding the Project Assignments as a substantial part of the PD leading to an appropriate pay adjustment.

Essential Duties, Responsibilities, and Expectations:

These essential duties are not inclusive of all the duties that may be assigned.

A. WATER RIGHT ANALYSIS AND ORDINANCE ADMINISTRATION 60%

1. Implements the Ordinance, analyzes and makes recommendations regarding the use, availability, and management of water resources.
2. Processes a wide variety of water right applications under the Ordinance and evaluates the accuracy and extent of the applicants request.
3. Prepares maps using Geographic Information System (GIS) and other mapping technology;
4. Prepares technical reports, memorandums, and letters tailored to specific situations reflecting analysis of water use applications;
5. Evaluates validity of proposed, existing, and historical water rights;
6. Reviews and researches technical literature, county records, historic water right documents, legal records, deeds, trust documents, articles of incorporation, and other information needed to resolve water use applications and issues;
7. Participates in water right database administration and development.

8. Consults with the Water Engineer, staff hydrologists, staff legal counsel and other resource professionals to gain information needed to resolve technical and legal issues relating to historical, existing, and proposed new water uses;
9. Provides information regarding policies, positions and viewpoints to stakeholders, Tribal, state, and local entities such as conservation districts, local planning boards, and student groups;
10. Assists the OE with developing policies, forms, procedures, and work processes needed for start-up and implementation of the Ordinance;
11. Provides technical review of OE reports and written products;
12. Performs independent field investigations;
13. Provides technical and investigative assistance to Engineer and Board attorneys regarding objections and water quantification issues for new applications;
14. Conducts comprehensive analyses of all water uses in basins being considered for groundwater and surface water closures and provides technical water availability information. Monitors activities related to groundwater management areas, Tribal water rights, state-based water rights, and federal reserved water rights;
15. Determines if elements of a water right application have been met and may then modify, remark, condition, or deny the water right;
16. Appears as an expert witness providing testimony, expert opinions, and supporting evidence in contested-case hearings.
17. Attends public meetings as needed on a variety of water resource issues. Analyzes hydrologic data and information to determine if water rights of a prior appropriator will be adversely affected and if the proposed means of diversion, construction, and operation are adequate; and
18. Analyzes the applicant's justification and calculations for the requested flow rate and volume to determine if the amount of water requested is reasonable.

B. PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, COMPLAINTS, AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION 25%

1. Supports, sometimes independently, opening, operating, and closing the OE for all phases of general office operations including greeting and direct interface with the public, either at the office or at remote meetings;
2. Researches water use information, well log information and land ownership records specific to individual requests from the public;

3. Provides precise information and interpretations using a variety of sources including the Ordinance, county clerk and recorder records, county assessor tax records, and other records.
4. Compiles research information to develop reports and create GIS maps for the general public, attorneys, water users, and consultants. The Specialist must often present information that is contrary to the opinions of others and may face debate and confrontation. Considerable economic investment and land use decisions may be based on the accuracy of the information provided by the Specialist.

C. OTHER DUTIES AS ASSIGNED

15%

1. Performs a variety of other professional and technical duties in support of the Office of the Engineer and the Board. This includes activities such as attending training and educational programs, meetings, and conferences;
2. Representing the Board to local groups and communities; and reviewing and commenting on administrative and technical policies and procedures; and
3. Completes administrative functions including providing input on OE annual work plans, and other related duties as assigned.

Direction Received:

The Water Resource Specialist receives direction from the Water Engineer who makes general and broad assignments. The incumbent is expected to use technical experience and education to complete assignments in a timely and professional manner.

Due to the “start up nature” of the FRWMB compact implementation, the incumbent is expected to discuss precedent setting situations with the Water Engineer, prior to implementation.

The Water Resource Specialist will resolve most situations using expertise and experience.

Working Relationships:

Incumbent works with other professionals as an official representative of the FRWMB and the Water Engineer. Most contact is giving directions, offering clarification and advice to applicants and customers. Will work directly with complex situations and complicated water rights applications. Is expected to

communicate professionally and clearly so that processes are understood and transparent to the public.

Will interface with State, Tribal and Federal staff as part of a team in support of full compact implementation.

Competencies or Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Knowledge: The work requires extensive knowledge of water resource-related management theories, principles, concepts, and practices; field investigation methodologies; and negotiation, mediation, and conflict resolution techniques. Knowledge of the CSKT-Montana Compact and Ordinance or other reserved compacts recommended. Knowledge required of local water availability, water use practices, water measurement techniques and devices, irrigation methods and designs and land ownership records.

Skills: The position requires skill in effective communication with people of varied technical levels. Must be skilled in operation of computers, MS365, Word, Outlook, Excel, and Adobe. Must be skilled in project management, conducting legal research, and reading technical data and reports. The incumbent must be capable of becoming proficient in GIS application (ArcView) and accessing, analyzing, and manipulating data in a computer database environment.

Abilities: The position requires the ability to analyze and appraise facts, evidence, legal documents, and records to make defensible decisions. Must communicate effectively verbally and in writing. Demonstrated proficiency in adjusting to meet changing priorities while simultaneously working on multiple projects. Communicates objectively when providing information, advice, and guidance to technical and non-technical individuals and groups on complex and controversial issues. Initiative and motivation to act independently and take responsibility for evaluating and responding to challenging situations, problems, and opportunities. Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with coworkers, supervisor, the Board, state and Tribal agencies, local governments, and the public. Models high standards of honesty, integrity, trust, and openness. Knows and follows through with the correct standards of conduct and moral judgement. Communicates and demonstrates actions in a consistent manner. Respects others, regardless of individual capabilities, agendas, opinions, or needs. Focuses to achieve results. Actively participates and respects the ideas of others. Looks for alternative ways to work with others that will create better

results and working relationships.

Physical Demands & Working Conditions:

[described demands are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.]

The incumbent works primarily in an office setting. Frequent and continuous physical activities required including: sitting, typing, writing, hearing, listening, talking, bending, stooping, and lifting up to 25 pounds. Occasional travel may be expected. This role is mostly protected from weather conditions or contaminants, but not necessarily from the occasional temperature fluctuation. Works frequently with computer hardware including set up of PCs, printers, modems, etc., and works at a computer terminal daily for extended periods of time. There is frequent exposure to stress associated with deadlines and changing priorities, and there is occasional exposure to hostility from the public. Water Resource Specialists sometimes perform field work in outdoor settings where exposure to weather and field challenges may occur.

Some field work may occur with this position.

Remote Work:

Remote work may be an option for this position but is not a guarantee. Remote work will be conducted according to OE Personnel Policies. A formal remote work agreement is required before implementing a remote work schedule and until executed, all work must be conducted in-person at the OE physical address.

Project Assignments:

The assignments below are under development with this position and will be incorporated into the position's Promotion Plan.

- OE Water Rights Records Manager – provides methods and compliance adherence to standardize water right record management for all aspects of water rights administered by the OE. Trains staff and provides formal documentation of accepted procedures.
- OE WRIS Lead – works to transfer institutional knowledge from existing staff, leading toward providing leadership of knowledgebase, standards compliance, and staff training for WRIS data input, management, and QA/QC.

- OE Hearings/Complaints Clerk – works with the Water Engineer and/or any OE hearings examiner to provide support in the drafting of complaint and hearing documents, supporting hearings when they occur, and organizing hearings and complaint records for OE archives.

Acknowledgement

My signature below indicates the statements in the position description are accurate and complete.

Date

Ethan Mace, Water Engineer

My signature below indicates that I have read and acknowledge the requirements of the position description.

Date

Amanda Berens, Water Resources Specialist II