



International St. Mary-Milk Rivers Study Technical Working Groups

Socio-Economic Analysis



U.S. Co-chair
Susan Gilbertz

Dean of College of Business, Montana State University – Billings

Expertise: Socio-cultural relationships people and the natural world, specifically water resources

Background

The Socio-Economic Analysis (SEA) Technical Working Group (TWG) research and summarize many documents published about water rights in the basin, including:

- past economic assessments and water-related interests in the St. Mary – Milk River system
- historical analysis of water availability, apportionment and irrigation
- water rights within the watersheds
- past droughts and impacts on water availability (water scarcity); and,
- other past studies on the St. Mary - Milk Rivers as related to cultural and socio-economic interests and values reflecting the human dimensions of water management in the basins.

Focus

The Socio-Economic Analysis (SEA) Technical Working Group (TWG) analysis will consist of two parts, a socio-cultural component and an economic component.

The socio-cultural members of the TWG will collect and report responses to help describe the historical use of water in the basin and changes in practices during the last decade as a consequence of, or in anticipation of, changes in the timing or availability of water supplies. Additionally, the socio-cultural team will report on concerns of the water users in the basin and the cultural role that waters plays in the basin.

The economic team members of the TWG will compile information that describes the economic value of water delivered to farms in the St Mary Basin, Alberta; Milk River Basin, Alberta; and Milk River Basin, Montana, and potential economic consequences of changes in water availability due to structural or administrative modification and climate change.



Canadian Co-chair
R. A. (Bob) Halliday

Semi-retired

Expertise: Interjurisdictional water management, floodplain, management and hydrometry

Planned Outputs

The SEA TWG will produce reports on the values of water in the basin, both economically and socio-culturally. These summaries will enable the development of performance indicators to understand how changes streamflow and reservoir elevations will affect different economic and social-cultural uses of water in the basin. The information will also allow the Study Board to better understand how different infrastructure, administrative options, and climate change will affect the availability of water for different uses in the basin.