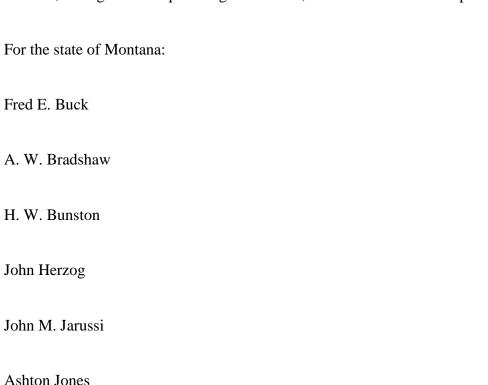
The legislative assembly of the state of Montana hereby approves and ratifies the compact designated as the "Yellowstone River Compact", dated at the city of Billings, state of Montana, on the 8th of December, 1950, signed by Fred E. Buck, A.W. Bradshaw, H.W. Bunston, John Herzog, John M. Jarussi, Ashton Jones, Chris Josephson, A. Wallace Kingsbury, P.F. Leonard, Walter M. McLaughlin, Dave M. Manning, Joseph Muggli, Chester E. Onstad, Ed F. Parriott, R.R. Renne, and Keith W. Trout, as state representatives of the state of Montana on a compact commission between the states of Montana, North Dakota, and Wyoming, which compact is as follows:

YELLOWSTONE RIVER COMPACT

The state of Montana, the state of North Dakota, and the state of Wyoming, being moved by consideration of interstate comity and desiring to remove all causes of present and future controversy between said states and between persons in one and persons in another with respect to the waters of the Yellowstone River and its tributaries, other than waters within or waters which contribute to the flow of streams within the Yellowstone National Park, and desiring to provide for an equitable division and apportionment of such waters and to encourage the beneficial development and use thereof, acknowledging that in future projects or programs for the regulation, control, and use of water in the Yellowstone River basin the great importance of water for irrigation in the signatory states shall be recognized, have resolved to conclude a compact as authorized under the act of congress of the United States of America, approved June 2, 1949 (Public Law 83, 81st congress, First Session), for the attainment of these purposes and to that end, through their respective governments, have named as their respective commissioners:



Chris Josephson
A. Wallace Kingsbury
P. F. Leonard
Walter M. McLaughlin
Dave M. Manning
Joseph Muggli
Chester E. Onstad
Ed F. Parriott
R. R. Renne
Keith W. Trout
For the state of North Dakota:
I. A. Acker
Einar H. Dahl
J. J. Walsh
For the state of Wyoming:

Earl T. Bower
J. Harold Cash
Ben F. Cochrane
Ernest J. Goppert
Richard L. Greene
E. C. Gwillim
E. J. Johnson
Lee E. Keith
N. V. Kurtz
Harry L. Littlefield
R. E. McNally
Will G. Metz
Mark N. Partridge
Alonzo R. Shreve

L. C. Bishop

Charles M. Smith

Leonard F. Thornton

M. B. Walker

who, after negotiations participated in by R. J. Newell, appointed as the representative of the United States of America, have agreed upon the following articles, to wit:

Article I

A. Where the name of a state is used in this compact, as a party thereto, it shall be construed to include the individuals, corporations, partnerships, associations, districts, administrative departments, bureaus, political subdivisions, agencies, persons, permittees, appropriators, and all others using, claiming, or in any manner asserting any right to the use of the waters of the Yellowstone River system under the authority of said state.

B. Any individual, corporation, partnership, association, district, administrative department, bureau, political subdivision, agency, person, permittee, or appropriator authorized by or under the laws of a signatory state and all others using, claiming, or in any manner asserting any right to the use of the waters of the Yellowstone River system under the authority of said state shall be subject to the terms of this compact. Where the singular is used in this article, it shall be construed to include the plural.

Article II

A. The state of Montana, the state of North Dakota, and the state of Wyoming are hereinafter designated as "Montana", "North Dakota", and "Wyoming", respectively.

B. The terms "commission" and "Yellowstone River Compact commission" mean the agency created as provided herein for the administration of this compact.

C. The term "Yellowstone River basin" means areas in Wyoming, Montana, and North Dakota drained by the Yellowstone River and its tributaries and includes the area in Montana known as lake basin but excludes those lands lying within Yellowstone National Park.

- D. The term "Yellowstone River system" means the Yellowstone River and all of its tributaries, including springs and swamps, from their sources to the mouth of the Yellowstone River near Buford, North Dakota, except those portions thereof which are within or contribute to the flow of streams within the Yellowstone National Park.
- E. The term "tributary" means any stream which in a natural state contributes to the flow of the Yellowstone River, including interstate tributaries and tributaries thereof but excluding those which are within or contribute to the flow of streams within the Yellowstone National Park.
- F. The term "interstate tributaries" means the Clarks Fork, Yellowstone River; the Big Horn River (except Little Big Horn River); the Tongue River; and the Powder River, whose confluences with the Yellowstone River are respectively at or near the city (or town) of Laurel, Big Horn, Miles City, and Terry, all in the state of Montana.
- G. The terms "divert" and "diversion" mean the taking or removing of water from the Yellowstone River or any tributary thereof when the water so taken or removed is not returned directly into the channel of the Yellowstone River or of the tributary from which it is taken.
- H. The term "beneficial use" is herein defined to be that use by which the water supply of a drainage basin is depleted when usefully employed by the activities of man.
- I. The term "domestic use" shall mean the use of water by an individual or by a family unit or household for drinking, cooking, laundering, sanitation, and other personal comforts and necessities and for the irrigation of a family garden or orchard not exceeding one-half acre in area.
- J. The term "stock water use" shall mean the use of water for livestock and poultry.

Article III

A. It is considered that no commission or administrative body is necessary to administer this compact or divide the waters of the Yellowstone River basin as between the states of Montana and North Dakota. The provisions of this compact, as between the states of Wyoming and Montana, shall be administered by a commission composed of one representative from the state of Wyoming and one representative from the state of Montana, to be selected by the governors of said states as such states may choose, and one representative selected by the director of the United States geological survey or whatever federal agency may succeed to the functions and

duties of that agency, to be appointed by him at the request of the states to sit with the commission and who shall, when present, act as chairman of the commission without vote, except as herein provided.

- B. The salaries and necessary expenses of each state representative shall be paid by the respective state; all other expenses incident to the administration of this compact not borne by the United States shall be allocated to and borne one-half by the state of Wyoming and one-half by the state of Montana.
- C. In addition to other powers and duties herein conferred upon the commission and the members thereof, the jurisdiction of the commission shall include the collection, correlation, and presentation of factual data, the maintenance of records having a bearing upon the administration of this compact, and recommendations to such states upon matters connected with the administration of this compact, and the commission may employ such services and make such expenditures as reasonable and necessary within the limit of funds provided for that purpose by the respective states and shall compile a report for each year ending September 30 and transmit it to the governors of the signatory states on or before December 31 of each year.
- D. The secretary of the army; the secretary of the interior; the secretary of agriculture; the chairman, federal power commission; the secretary of commerce, or comparable officers of whatever federal agencies may succeed to the functions and duties of these agencies and such other federal officers and officers of appropriate agencies of the signatory states having services or data useful or necessary to the compact commission shall cooperate, ex officio, with the commission in the execution of its duty in the collection, correlation, and publication of records and data necessary for the proper administration of the compact; and these officers may perform such other services related to the compact as may be mutually agreed upon with the commission.
- E. The commission shall have power to formulate rules and regulations and to perform any act which it may find necessary to carry out the provisions of this compact and to amend such rules and regulations. All such rules and regulations shall be filed in the office of the state engineer of each of the signatory states for public inspection.
- F. In case of the failure of the representatives of Wyoming and Montana to unanimously agree on any matter necessary to the proper administration of this compact, then the member selected by the director of the United States geological survey shall have the right to vote upon the matters in disagreement and such points of disagreement shall then be decided by a majority vote of the representatives of the states of Wyoming and Montana and said member selected by the director of the United States geological survey, each being entitled to one vote.

G. The commission herein authorized shall have power to sue and be sued in its official capacity in any federal court of the signatory states and may adopt and use an official seal which shall be judicially noticed.

Article IV

The commission shall itself or in conjunction with other responsible agencies cause to be established, maintained, and operated such suitable water gauging and evaporation stations as it finds necessary in connection with its duties.

Article V

A. Appropriative rights to the beneficial uses of the water of the Yellowstone River system existing in each signatory state as of January 1, 1950, shall continue to be enjoyed in accordance with the laws governing the acquisition and use of water under the doctrine of appropriation.

B. Of the unused and unappropriated waters of the interstate tributaries of the Yellowstone River as of January 1, 1950, there is allocated to each signatory state such quantity of that water as shall be necessary to provide supplemental water supplies for the rights described in paragraph A of this Article V, such supplemental rights to be acquired and enjoyed in accordance with the laws governing the acquisition and use of water under the doctrine of appropriation, and the remainder of the unused and unappropriated water is allocated to each state for storage or direct diversions for beneficial use on new lands or for other purposes as follows:

- 1. Clarks Fork, Yellowstone River
- a. to Wyoming 60% to Montana 40%
- b. The point of measurement shall be below the last diversion from Clarks Fork above Rock Creek.
- 2. Big Horn River (exclusive of Little Big Horn River)
- a. to Wyoming 80% to Montana 20%

- b. The point of measurement shall be below the last diversion from the Big Horn River above its junction with the Yellowstone River, and the inflow of the Little Big Horn River shall be excluded from the quantity of water subject to allocation.
- 3. Tongue River
- a. to Wyoming 40% to Montana 60%
- b. The point of measurement shall be below the last diversion from the Tongue River above its junction with the Yellowstone River.
- 4. Powder River (including the Little Powder River)
- a. to Wyoming 42% to Montana 58%
- b. The point of measurement shall be below the last diversion from the Powder River above its junction with the Yellowstone River.
- C. The quantity of water subject to the percentage allocations in paragraph B 1, 2, 3, and 4 of this Article V shall be determined on an annual water year basis measured from October 1 of any year through September 30 of the succeeding year. The quantity to which the percentage factors shall be applied through a given date in any water year shall be, in acre-feet, equal to the algebraic sum of:
- 1. the total diversions, in acre-feet, above the point of measurement, for irrigation, municipal, and industrial uses in Wyoming and Montana developed after January 1, 1950, during the period from October 1 to that given date;
- 2. the net change in storage, in acre-feet, in all reservoirs in Wyoming and Montana above the point of measurement completed subsequent to January 1, 1950, during the period from October 1 to that given date;

- 3. the net change in storage, in acre-feet, in existing reservoirs in Wyoming and Montana above the point of measurement, which is used for irrigation, municipal, and industrial purposes developed after January 1, 1950, during the period October 1 to that given date;
- 4. the quantity of water, in acre-feet, that passed the point of measurement in the stream during the period from October 1 to that given date.
- D. All existing rights to the beneficial use of waters of the Yellowstone River in the states of Montana and North Dakota below Intake, Montana, valid under the laws of these states as of January 1, 1950, are hereby recognized and shall be and remain unimpaired by this compact. During the period May 1 to September 30, inclusive, of each year, lands within Montana and North Dakota shall be entitled to the beneficial use of the flow of waters of the Yellowstone River below Intake, Montana, on a proportionate basis of acreage irrigated. Waters of tributary streams having their origin in either Montana or North Dakota, situated entirely in said respective states and flowing into the Yellowstone River below Intake, Montana, are allotted to the respective states in which situated.
- E. There are hereby excluded from the provisions of this compact:
- 1. existing and future domestic and stock water uses of water, provided that the capacity of any reservoir for stock water so excluded shall not exceed 20 acre-feet:
- 2. devices and facilities for the control and regulation of surface waters.
- F. From time to time the commission shall reexamine the allocations herein made and upon unanimous agreement may recommend modifications therein as are fair, just, and equitable, giving consideration among other factors to:

priorities of water rights;
acreage irrigated;
acreage irrigable under existing works; and

potentially irrigable lands.

Article VI

Nothing contained in this compact shall be so construed or interpreted as to affect adversely any rights to the use of the waters of Yellowstone River and its tributaries owned by or for Indians, Indian tribes, and their reservations.

Article VII

A. A lower signatory state shall have the right, by compliance with the laws of an upper signatory state, except as to legislative consent, to file application for and receive permits to appropriate and use any waters in the Yellowstone River system not specifically apportioned to or appropriated by such upper state as provided in Article V; and to construct or participate in the construction and use of any dam, storage reservoir, or diversion works in such upper state for the purpose of conserving and regulating water that may be apportioned to or appropriated by the lower state. Provided, that such right is subject to the rights of the upper state to control, regulate, and use the water apportioned to and appropriated by it. And provided further, that should an upper state elect, it may share in the use of any such facilities constructed by a lower state to the extent of its reasonable needs upon assuming or guaranteeing payment of its proportionate share of the cost of the construction, operation, and maintenance. This provision shall apply with equal force and effect to an upper state in the circumstance of the necessity of the acquisition of rights by an upper state in a lower state.

- B. Each claim hereafter initiated for an appropriation of water in one signatory state for use in another signatory state shall be filed in the office of the state engineer of the signatory state in which the water is to be diverted, and a duplicate copy of the application or notice shall be filed in the office of the state engineer of the signatory state in which the water is to be used.
- C. Appropriations may hereafter be adjudicated in the state in which the water is diverted, and where a portion or all of the lands irrigated are in another signatory state, such adjudications shall be confirmed in that state by the proper authority. Each adjudication is to conform with the laws of the state where the water is diverted and shall be recorded in the county and state where the water is used.
- D. The use of water allocated under Article V of this compact for projects constructed after the date of this compact by the United States of America or any of its agencies or instrumentalities shall be charged as a use by the state in which the use is made. Provided, that such use incident to the diversion, impounding, or conveyance of water in one state for use in another shall be charged to such latter state.

Article VIII

A lower signatory state shall have the right to acquire in an upper state by purchase or through exercise of the power of eminent domain such lands, easements, and rights-of-way for the construction, operation, and maintenance of pumping plants, storage reservoirs, canals, conduits, and appurtenant works as may be required for the enjoyment of the privileges granted herein to such lower state. This provision shall apply with equal force and effect to an upper state in the circumstance of the necessity of the acquisition of rights by an upper state in a lower state.

Article IX

Should any facilities be constructed by a lower signatory state in an upper signatory state under the provisions of Article VII, the construction, operation, repairs, and replacements of such facilities shall be subject to the laws of the upper state. This provision shall apply with equal force and effect to an upper state in the circumstance of the necessity of the acquisition of rights by an upper state in a lower state.

Article X

No water shall be diverted from the Yellowstone River basin without the unanimous consent of all the signatory states. In the event water from another river basin shall be imported into the Yellowstone River basin or transferred from one tributary basin to another by the United States of America, Montana, North Dakota, or Wyoming or any of them jointly, the state having the right to the use of such water shall be given proper credit therefor in determining its share of the water apportioned in accordance with Article V herein.

Article XI

The provisions of this compact shall remain in full force and effect until amended in the same manner as it is required to be ratified to become operative as provided in Article XV.

Article XII

This compact may be terminated at any time by unanimous consent of the signatory states, and upon such termination all rights then established hereunder shall continue unimpaired.

Article XIII

Nothing in this compact shall be construed to limit or prevent any state from instituting or maintaining any action or proceeding, legal or equitable, in any federal court or the United States supreme court, for the protection of any right under this compact or the enforcement of any of its provisions.

Article XIV

The physical and other conditions characteristic of the Yellowstone River and peculiar to the territory drained and served thereby and to the development thereof have actuated the signatory states in the consummation of this compact, and none of them, or the United States of America by its consent and approval, concedes thereby the establishment of any general principle or precedent with respect to other interstate streams.

Article XV

This compact shall become operative when approved by the legislature of each of the signatory states and consented to and approved by the congress of the United States.

Article XVI

Nothing in this compact shall be deemed:

- (a) to impair or affect the sovereignty or jurisdiction of the United States of America in or over the area of waters affected by such compact, any rights or powers of the United States of America, its agencies, or instrumentalities in and to the use of the waters of the Yellowstone River basin or its capacity to acquire rights in and to the use of said waters;
- (b) to subject any property of the United States of America, its agencies, or instrumentalities to taxation by any state or subdivision thereof or to create an obligation on the part of the United States of America, its agencies, or instrumentalities, by reason of the acquisition, construction, or operation of any property or works of whatsoever kind, to make any payments to any state or political subdivision thereof, state agency, municipality, or entity whatsoever in reimbursement for the loss of taxes;

(c) to subject any property of the United States of America, its agencies, or instrumentalities to the laws of any state to an extent other than the extent to which these laws would apply without regard to the compact.

Article XVII

Should a court of competent jurisdiction hold any part of this compact to be contrary to the constitution of any signatory state or of the United States of America, all other severable provisions of this compact shall continue in full force and effect.

Article XVIII

No sentence, phrase, or clause in this compact or in any provision thereof shall be construed or interpreted to divest any signatory state or any of the agencies or officers of such states of the jurisdiction of the water of each state as apportioned in this compact.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the commissioners have signed this compact in quadruplicate original, one of which shall be filed in the archives of the department of state of the United States of America and shall be deemed the authoritative original, and of which a duly certified copy shall be forwarded to the governor of each signatory state.

Done at the city of Billings in the state of Montana, this 8th day of December, in the year of Our Lord, one thousand nine hundred and fifty.

Commissioners for the state of Montana:

Fred E. Buck /S/Fred E. Buck
A. W. Bradshaw /S/A. W. Bradshaw
H. W. Bunston /S/H. W. Bunston
John Herzog /S/John Herzog
John M. Jarussi /S/John M. Jarussi
Ashton Jones /S/Ashton Jones
Chris Josephson /S/Chris Josephson
A. Wallace Kingsbury /S/A. Wallace Kingsbury
P. F. Leonard /S/P. F. Leonard
Walter M. McLaughlin /S/Walter M. McLaughlin
Dave M. Manning /S/Dave M. Manning

Joseph Muggli /S/Joseph Muggli Chester E. Onstad /S/Chester E. Onstad Ed F. Parriott /S/Ed F. Parriott R. R. Renne /S/R. R. Renne Keith W. Trout /S/Keith W. Trout

Commissioners for the state of North Dakota:

I. A. Acker /S/I. A. Acker Einar H. Dahl /S/Einar H. Dahl J. J. Walsh /S/J. J. Walsh

Commissioners for the state of Wyoming:

L. C. Bishop /S/L. C. Bishop Earl T. Bower /S/Earl T. Bower J. Harold Cash /S/J. Harold Cash Ben F. Cochrane /S/Ben F. Cochrane Ernest J. Goppert /S/Ernest J. Goppert Richard L. Greene /S/Richard L. Greene E. C. Gwillim /S/E. C. Gwillim E. J. Johnson /S/E. J. Johnson Lee K. Keith /S/Lee K. Keith N. V. Kurtz /S/N. V. Kurtz Harry L. Littlefield /S/Harry L. Littlefield R. E. McNally /S/R. E. McNally Will G. Metz /S/Will G. Metz Mark N. Partridge /S/Mark N. Partridge Alonzo R. Shreve /S/Alonzo R. Shreve Charles M. Smith /S/Charles M. Smith Leonard F. Thornton /S/Leonard F. Thornton M. B. Walker /S/M. B. Walker

I have participated in the negotiation of this compact and intend to report favorably thereon to the congress of the United States.

/S/ R. J. Newell R. J. Newell, Representative of the United States of America.

85-20-102. Purpose of the part

Under the provisions of the Yellowstone River Compact (Chapter 39, Laws of Montana 1951), all appropriative rights to the beneficial uses of the waters of the interstate tributaries of the Yellowstone River existing in each signatory state as of January 1, 1950, have been recognized and shall continue to be enjoyed in accordance with the laws governing the acquisition and use of water under the doctrine of appropriation. All appropriative rights to the beneficial uses of the waters of the interstate tributaries of the Yellowstone River acquired after January 1, 1950, are subject to distribution in the states of Montana and Wyoming in accordance to the percentages in the different basins as provided in subsections (2) and (3) of Article V of said compact. The purpose of this part is to provide the means to determine the various appropriative rights to the beneficial uses of water of the interstate tributaries of the Yellowstone River acquired after January 1, 1950, and the quantity of water diverted and used by each such appropriator during each year, to enable the state of Montana and the Yellowstone River Compact commission to comply with and to administer the percentage allocations as provided in subsections (2) and (3) of Article V of said compact.

85-20-103. Definitions

Unless the context requires otherwise, in this part the following definitions apply:

- (1) "Department" means the department of natural resources and conservation provided for in Title 2, chapter 15, part 33.
- (2) "Divert" and "diversion" mean the taking or removing of water from any interstate tributary or any tributary thereof, when the water so taken or removed is not returned directly into the channel of the interstate tributary or of the tributary thereof from which it is taken.
- (3) "Domestic use" means the use of water by an individual or by a family unit or household for drinking, cooking, laundering, sanitation, and other personal comforts and necessities and for the irrigation of a family garden or orchard not exceeding one-half acre in area.
- (4) "Interstate tributaries" or "interstate tributary" means the following described rivers which contribute to the flow of the Yellowstone River in the state of Montana, including all tributaries thereof: the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River; the Big Horn River (except the Little Big Horn River); the Tongue River; and the Powder River, whose confluences with the Yellowstone River are respectively at or near the city (or town) of Laurel, Big Horn, Miles City, and Terry, all in the state of Montana.

(5) "Person" means any person, corporation, partnership, association, municipal corporation, agency, and all others authorized by the laws of the state to appropriate water for beneficial uses
(6) "Stock water use" means the use of water for livestock and poultry.85-20-104. Filing written statement with department
(1) A person claiming an appropriative right to the use of any water of any interstate tributary that was acquired after January 1, 1950, shall, within 60 days after February 25, 1953, or before the person diverts any water, file with the department at its office in Helena, Montana, a written statement containing the following information:
(a) the name of the claimant and the claimant's address;
(b) the date of appropriation or the date when the water was first applied to a beneficial use;
(c) the quantity of water claimed;
(d) the name of the stream, river, or other source of water from which the diversion is made, if it has a name, and if it does not, a description identifying the stream, river, or source;
(e) the purpose for which the water is claimed and the place of intended use;
(f) the means of diversion;
(g) whether or not a weir or other device for measuring the water intended to be diverted has been installed in the claimant's ditch or other means of diversion;
(h) if a notice of appropriation was filed with the county clerk and recorder, the name of the county where it was filed;
(i) whether the appropriation was made from an adjudicated or nonadjudicated stream, river, or other source of water.

(2) The written statement must be verified by the affidavit of the claimant or someone in the claimant's behalf. The affidavit must state that the matters and facts contained in the written statement are true.

85-20-105. Duty to install measuring devices

A person claiming an appropriative right to use any waters of any interstate tributary of the Yellowstone River that was acquired after January 1, 1950, shall, after February 25, 1953, and before the person diverts any water, install in the person's ditch or other means of diversion a weir or other measuring device so that all of the water to be diverted by the person can be accurately measured. The installation of a weir or other measuring device is subject to the approval of the department, and if in its judgment the weir or other measuring device or the installation of the weir or device is defective so that the water cannot be accurately measured, it may order the installation of an accurate measuring device. The claimant may not divert any water until the claimant complies with the order.

85-20-106. Duty to measure water

Each claimant shall measure all the water being diverted by the claimant, keep accurate records of the diversion on forms prescribed and furnished by the department, and, within 15 days after November 1 of each year, file the written records with the department at its office in Helena, Montana.

85-20-107. Status of prior rights

The rights to the beneficial use of any water of any interstate tributary of the Yellowstone River acquired prior to and including January 1, 1950, shall not be impaired by or subject to this part.

85-20-108. Domestic and stock uses exempted

Any appropriation of water from any interstate tributary of the Yellowstone River made for domestic or stock water uses will not come within the provisions of this part whenever the capacity of a reservoir for stock water does not exceed 20 acre-feet.

85-20-109. Department to make rules

The department of natural resources and conservation shall adopt and enforce reasonable rules consistent with this part and the Yellowstone River Compact.

85-20-110. Application to adjudicated and nonadjudicated waters

The provisions of this part shall apply to both adjudicated and nonadjudicated waters of the interstate tributaries of the Yellowstone River.

85-20-111. Department to make record available

The department shall furnish and make available to the Yellowstone River Compact commission, from the records filed in its office, all appropriative rights acquired after January 1, 1950, to the use of the waters of the interstate tributaries of the Yellowstone River in the state of Montana, the amount of the annual diversions from those interstate tributaries, and any other information that its records may disclose as may be required by the Yellowstone River Compact commission.

85-20-112. Services of county attorneys

The county attorneys of the state shall perform such legal services and bring such proceedings in carrying out the purposes of this part within their respective counties as the department shall require.

85-20-113. Penalty

Any person who violates or refuses or neglects to comply with any provision of this part or any order or rule adopted by the board or department pursuant thereto or the Yellowstone River Compact is guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be fined not less than \$25 or more than \$200 for each offense.

85-20-114 to 85-20-120. Reserved

85-20-114 to 85-20-120. Reserved

85-20-121. Yellowstone compact obligations unimpaired

Nothing contained in Chapter 280, Laws of 1965, shall in any manner impair the obligations of the state of Montana under the Yellowstone River Compact.

Current through all 2009 legislation and 2010 ballot measures END OF DOCUMENT

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