Welcome to the first issue of MEIC’s Capitol Monitor for the 2017 legislative session. As usual, you can expect to receive high-quality and up-to-date information on the session from MEIC.

We expect that this session will be one of the most challenging in MEIC’s 43-year history. We hope that by communicating promptly and frequently with you—our members—you will be able to participate more effectively in our lobbying efforts.

And—no kidding—we need your help. Our lobbyists cannot do it alone. Protecting the environment this session will require everyone’s efforts. So please use the Capitol Monitor and our website (www.meic.org) to become involved. Let’s protect the things that make Montana special.

Legislators need to be told over and over that Montanans want clean air, clean water, clean energy, and the right to participate in government decision-making. If they don’t hear from you, it could be that they will only hear from well-heeled, self-interested lobbyists. It’s your choice.

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A How-to Guide for Engaging During the 2017 Session

MEIC Legislative Bill Tracker
MEIC maintains and regularly updates a Legislative Bill Tracker on its website (go to www.meic.org/legislature) that includes the important legislative proposals that could impact Montana’s environment. All of the bills on our bill tracker are categorized by issue, offer easy-to-understand descriptions, list MEIC’s position, and include a tool for contacting key legislators.

Capitol Monitor and Blog
On MEIC’s website you can find an electronic version of Capitol Monitor (go to www.meic.org and look under “Media Center”), as well as a sign-up form to receive Capitol Monitor and other alerts by e-mail. MEIC also maintains a blog (also under “Media Center”) that has frequent posts about environmental and energy issues affecting Montana, and will include relevant writings on the 2017 Montana legislative session.

Calendar of Events
MEIC and other environmental organizations will hold “lobby days,” host legislative socials, and schedule membership meetings across the state to provide legislative updates. MEIC regularly updates its online events calendar, where you can learn the details of different events (go to www.meic.org and look under “Get Involved/Attend an Event”).
to weaken important environmental protections, for example, so that the Smith River mine and new and expanded coal mines can be developed regardless of their impact on water quality and the global climate. Clean energy is a bipartisan issue that lowers electricity bills and brings much needed revenue to communities across the state. MEIC will work on climate change and encouraging the transition away from coal, as well as on many other issues such as land use planning, air quality, oil and gas pollution, protecting constitutional rights, and much more.

MEIC will need the help of all of its members and supporters. We will make it easy for you:

- sending periodic newsletters updating you on happenings at the Capitol;
- constantly updating our website so you can know day-to-day what is going on and what you can do;
- working with other organizations to organize citizen lobby days, not only to teach you how to talk to legislators, but directing you to what most needs doing on that particular day;
- sending alerts asking for quick action from you, whether it is a telephone call or an e-mail message;
- letting you know about legislative hearings you can attend and testify at (it can feel good to give legislators a piece of your mind once in a while); and
- making maximum use of both traditional and social media to publicize our issues and concerns.

In short, there will be many ways to become involved and help protect Montana's environment. Please plan on participating. MEIC and the environment need you now, more than ever.

**Attend a Lobby Day!**

MEIC invites you to join us and other environmental interests at one of our Citizen Lobby Days. We will help guide you through the steps you need to talk effectively to your legislators about issues that matter to you. Please sign up for a citizen lobby day and let us help you protect the environment. Plan to attend one or all. The first one will be held on January 26th.
2017 Senate Committees*  
**NATURAL RESOURCES**  
Chair: Chas Vincent (R-Libby)  
Vice Chair: Jeffery Welborn (R-Bozeman)  
Secretary: Jamie Wilson, (406) 444-7363  
*

**FISH, WILDLIFE, AND PARKS**  
Chair: Kelly Flynn (R-Townsend)  
Vice Chair: Bob Brown (R-Vice Chair)  
Secretary: Bridget Smith (D-Lewis)  
*

**GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL MATTES**  
Chair: Roger Webb (R-Billings)  
Vice Chair: Mike Lang (R-Malta)  
Secretary: Laura Evilsizer, (406) 444-4610  
*

**ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS**  
Chair: Duane Ankeny (R-Colstrip)  
Vice Chair: Pat Connell (R-Hamilton)  
Secretary: Pam Schindler, (406) 444-4618  
*

**FISCAL APPROPRIATIONS**  
Chair: Steve Fitzpatrick (R-Great Falls)  
Vice Chair: Mike Phillips (R-Bozeman)  
Secretary: Laura Evilsizer, (406) 444-4610  

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**  
Chair: Steve Fitzpatrick (R-Great Falls)  
Vice Chair: Jill Cohenour (R-West Helena)  
Secretary: Laura Evilsizer, (406) 444-4610  

**LEGAL SERVICES**  
Chair: Steve Fitzpatrick (R-Great Falls)  
Vice Chair: Mike Phillips (R-Bozeman)  
Secretary: Laura Evilsizer, (406) 444-4610  

**2017 House Committees**  
**NATURAL RESOURCES**  
Chair: Roger White (R-Bozeman)  
Vice Chair: Theresa Manzella (R-Hamilton)  
Secretary: Laura Evilsizer, (406) 444-1513  

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT**  
Chair: Edward Greet (R-Florence)  
Vice Chair: Forrest Mansdorff (R-Columbus)  
Secretary: Sydney Kessel, (406) 444-1513  

**ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS**  
Chair: MWF, 3 pm, Room 303  
Vice Chair: Derek Skees (R-Kalispell)  
Secretary: Lexi Goble, (406) 444-4185  

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT**  
Chair: Tu/Th, 3 pm, Room 172  
Vice Chair: Joseph Eichenauer (R-Missoula)  
Secretary: Sydney Kessel, (406) 444-1513  

*This is only a partial list.

How to Contact Your Legislators

If you do not know who your legislators are, you can search by zip code on Project Vote Smart’s website: www.votesmart.org

**By computer:** MEIC will regularly offer ways to contact legislators via our 2017 legislative session page and online bill tracker: http://meic.org/legislature

**By telephone:** To leave a message for your legislator or for session information, call (406) 444-4800 between 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8 a.m. until adjournment on Saturday. You may need to be patient; the line has been understaffed in previous years.

**By mail:**
Montana Senate  
P.O. Box 200500  
Helena, MT 59620

Montana House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620

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MEIC’s Team at the Capitol

Leading MEIC’s lobbying staff at the Capitol is Anne Hedges, MEIC’s Deputy Director. Anne joined MEIC in May 1993, and has lobbied every session since. She handles a wide range of issues that are important to MEIC members including energy, land-use planning, environmental policy, and air quality.

Jim Jensen has been MEIC’s Executive Director since 1985. He attended Westminster College in Salt Lake City and holds a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Montana (1980). Jim will focus primarily on clean water and mining issues at the legislature.

Derf Johnson, MEIC’s Water Program Director, will be lobbying primarily on oil and gas development, hardrock mining, clean water, and energy issues. He is beginning his sixth year at MEIC. He is a graduate of the UM School of Law.

Brian Fadie, MEIC’s Clean Energy Program Director, will be lobbying primarily on renewable energy and energy efficiency issues. Brian recently started with MEIC, having graduated from the University of Michigan School of Natural Resources and Environment in 2016.

Nadine Nadow, MEIC’s Legislative Assistant, will be assisting MEIC’s lobbying team during the 2017 Montana Legislature. Nadine is finishing her last year as a student at Vermont Law School. Her studies are focused in land use law and water law. She enjoys spending time with her dog running trails, skiing, and playing ultimate frisbee.

Save paper and money

Do you want to save paper, have one less item in your mailbox, and save MEIC much-needed funds this session? Send us your e-mail address. We’ll remove your name from our postal mail list and add you to our e-Activists list. You’ll receive Capitol Monitor, updates on the bills we’re lobbying, and alerts when important bills need an extra push from citizens contacting their legislators. Send your e-mail address, if we don’t already have it, to Adam McLane: mclane@meic.org.

THANK YOU!

Left to right: Brian Fadie; Jim Jensen; Anne Hedges; and Derf Johnson