

- International Joint Commission St. Mary Milk Rivers Study Board Public Advisory Group (PAG) - Cheryl Bradley
  - I attended an online meeting last Wednesday (January 28, 2026) of the International St. Mary – Milk River Study Board. The Study Board provided an update on progress to the Independent Review Group and Advisory Groups (Public, Indigenous, Government Forum). It was the first meeting since September 5, 2025 with the time between meetings prolonged due to furlough of US Government staff.
  - The presentation at the meeting focused on the progress made in development of the visualization tool (Shiny App) for viewing response of performance indicators (entitlement, bull trout, irrigation) to various structural and non-structural scenarios and combinations thereof. Modelling of scenarios is being duplicated using both Montana’s Riverware water management model and Alberta’s Water Resources Management Model. The visualization tool provides a way to compare multiple scenarios for implications for 1) each country’s receipt of entitlement, 2) Bull Trout population growth rates in the St. Mary River at the International Boundary and 3) water availability for irrigation in the U.S. (inflow to the Fresno Reservoir) and in Canada (Milk River and St. Mary River). Our homework from the meeting is to peruse modelling results and choose three scenarios that we would want the ISMMR Study Board to recommend to IJC.
  - A Study Board ‘Road Map’ January 2026 – August 2026 was shared. The schedule is as follows:
    - Until Feb 13    Technical review and error correction
    - Feb 18-19        Draft Recommendations
    - Mar 4-23         Draft Study Report
    - Apr 23            Finalize Study Report
    - Apr 24-May 8     Advisory Group Review
    - Jun 18-Jul 29    Public Review
    - Sep 30            Final Report to IJC
  - Cam Lane, ED Watershed Resilience and Predictions, Water and Circular Economy Division with Environment and Protected Areas is Alberta representative on the Government Forum. Today (February 2, 2026) he and Kate Rich, his ADM, convened a meeting of advisory committee members from Alberta “to discuss IJC study status and working together to review recommendations and impacts to AB entitlements and water use in Alberta”. It was suggested there is a need to consider implications for irrigators throughout the Southern Tributaries. Up to this point consideration has stopped at the International Boundary. I stated that I would like to include consideration of potential impacts on the aquatic environment and opportunities for improving river health in the Southern Tributaries.
  - We were asked who else should be involved in ‘Team Alberta’. Representation from all Irrigation districts in the southern tribs (SMRID, RID, MID, UID, BTAP) was proposed by Richard Phillips. Any advice you may have on other interests from an environmental perspective appreciated. Also please let me know of any concerns and analysis you think may be required with respect to potential impacts of reduced flow in the St. Mary River in Alberta. If you want to meet to talk about this I can be available.