

**Pathfinder Municipal Account**

Source: Appropriated water Score: 4,000 AF Operations started: 2012 Mechanism: Storage

History

Pathfinder Reservoir is one of the major reservoirs in the North Platte Basin. Construction was completed by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) in 1909 for purposes of irrigation and domestic use. As part of the Pathfinder Modification Project completed in 2012, the elevation of the existing spillway was raised by about 2.4 feet to recapture nearly 54,000 AF of storage capacity lost to sedimentation. The Pathfinder Environmental Account (EA), one of the Program’s three initial state water projects, accounts for about 34,000 AF of this storage. The remaining 20,000 AF compromises the “Wyoming Account” (or Municipal Account). Wyoming has the exclusive right to contract with the USBR for this water for municipal, environmental and fish and wildlife purposes, pursuant to the 2001 Final Settlement Stipulation in Nebraska vs. Wyoming. The Program began leasing Municipal Account water from Wyoming in 2012.

Operations

Municipal Account water leased by the Program is released from Pathfinder Reservoir and routed to Lake McConaughy via the North Platte River, where it is stored in the Lake McConaughy EA. Per a 2011 Agreement between the Program and Wyoming Water Development Office (WWDO), the WWDO annually provides an estimate of water available to the Program on or before the first day of May and if warranted, provides an updated estimate by June 15. The Program Executive Director, after consultation with the EA Manager, responds with the quantity of water the Program would like to have released from the Municipal Account and the timing of release. Historically, the

**Pathfinder Modification Project ogee weir construction, 2011**



Municipal Account water has been released at the end of the water year in September, no later than October 1. Once released, transit losses are applied to the leased Pathfinder Municipal Account water. The volume reaching Lewellen, NE is credited to the Lake McConaughy EA. Stored water is released from the Lake McConaughy EA to reduce shortages to USFWS target flows or for other Program purposes.

Yield and Score

The Program received a base delivery of 4,800 AFY of Municipal Account water from 2012-2017. In three of those years, an additional 4,800 AFY was accepted for a total of 9,600 AFY. In 2016, the additional 4,800 AFY was available but declined by the Program. These yields are measured at the Pathfinder Reservoir dam. Transit losses are deducted to determine the amount of Municipal Account water that is credited to the Lake McConaughy EA. These annual amounts along with the Municipal Account deliveries at Pathfinder Dam are summarized in Table 1. Based on the Program’s scoring analysis methodologies, the project is credited a score of 4,000 AF at Grand Island. The score is currently being updated to reflect the regular availability of water exceeding the 4,800 AF base delivery.

Financials

The Program paid $1,958,400 in 2012 for the initial 38,400 AF of deliveries, representing an average delivery of 4,800 AFY from 2012-2019 at a cost of $51 per AF. In 2017, total cumulative deliveries exceeded 38,400 AFY, at which point the Program and WWDO invoked a contract clause to purchase additional water at $65 per AF through the end of the First Increment in 2019.

A stone building with a mountain in the background

Description generated with very high confidence**Table 1:Pathfinder Municipal Account Yields**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Releases Measured at Pathfinder Dam**  **(AF)** | **Deliveries to Lake McConaughy1  (AF)** |
| 2012 | 4,800 | 4,400 |
| 2013 | 4,800 | 4,400 |
| 2014 | 9,600 | 8,500 |
| 2015 | 9,600 | 9,200 |
| 2016 | 4,800 | 4,100 |
| 2017 | 9,600 | 8,500 |
| **Total** | **43,200** | **39,100** |
| **Average** | **7,200** | **6,500** |

1 Deliveries are credited to the Lake McConaughy EA.

**Pathfinder Reservoir Dam**

Note: Values are preliminary and subject to change.

A picture containing grass, sky, outdoor, tree

Description generated with very high confidence

**Pathfinder Reservoir**