



1 **PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**
2 **Water Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**
3 **Nebraska Game and Parks Commission – Lake McConaughy Visitors Center, NE**

4
5 **July 21, 2009**

6
7 **Attendance**

8 Frank Kwapnioski – WAC Chair, NPPD
9 Jerry Kenny – Executive Director, Headwaters Corp
10 Beorn Courtney – ED Office/Headwaters Corp
11 Sabre Duren – ED Office/Headwaters Corp
12 Mike Besson – Wyoming Water Development Office
13 Mike Purcell – Wyoming Water Development Office
14 Matt Hoobler – Wyoming SEO
15 Jim Schneider – Nebraska DNR
16 Jim Hall – Colorado DWR
17 Joe Frank – Colorado LSPWCD
18 Pat Goltl – Nebraska DNR
19 Jennifer Schellpeper – Nebraska DNR
20 Kent Miller – Downstream Water Users/Twin Platte NRD
21 Duane Woodward – Central Platte NRD
22 Rich Holloway – Tri-Bain NRD
23 Sandy Vana-Miller – Colorado USFWS
24 Matt Rabbe – Nebraska USFWS
25 Larry Reynolds – Tri-Basin NRD
26 Greg Wingfield – Grand Island – USFWS
27 Don Anderson – Colorado USFWS
28 Brock Merrill – Wyoming USBR
29 Jeff Runge – Nebraska USFWS
30 Dennis Strauch – Upper Platte Water Users/Pathfinder Irrigation District
31 Jon Altenhofen – Colorado Water Users/Northern Colorado WCD
32 Cory Steinke – CNPPID
33 Mike Drain – CNPPID
34 Pat O’Brien – Nebraska Association of Resource Districts (phone)
35 Ted Kowalski – State of Colorado/CWCB (phone)

36
37 **Welcome and Administrative**

38 Introductions; no agenda modifications. **The May WAC Meeting Minutes, as amended, were**
39 **approved.**
40



41 **Nebraska Depletion Plan Update**

42 Schellpeper presented an overview of the Nebraska New Depletion Plan (NNDP), scheduling
43 and reporting, and tasks remaining to be completed as implementation occurs. Nebraska is using
44 the COHYST model and other management tools to determine the amount, timing, and location
45 of depletions to state-protected flows and the Program's target flows. Kwapnioski thanked
46 Schellpeper and said we're not expecting action or approval for the Nebraska Depletions Plan,
47 just the overview presentation.

48
49 **Wyoming Depletions Plan Update**

50 Purcell gave a presentation on updates to the Wyoming Depletions Plan. Since the original
51 Depletions Plan, they have fixed the irrigated baselines because areas that were non-
52 hydrologically connected were previously included in estimates. Purcell discussed Amendment
53 III and how Wyoming would like to withdraw the non-hydrologically connected areas from the
54 baseline. Maps were provided with the current boundaries and the proposed boundaries. **The
55 WAC approved a recommendation to the GC for consideration of Amendment III.**

56
57 Hoobler gave a presentation on the Wyoming 2008 Depletions Report. He discussed Baseline 1
58 and how it did not exceed the Modified North Platte Decree acreage or the Kendrick Project.
59 Even with proposed acre changes, Wyoming would still need to be in compliance with the
60 226,000 acres that are entitled to the North Platte Decree. For Baseline II, Wyoming received
61 100% reporting from industries, 96% of municipalities, and review of new surface water and
62 groundwater activities. There were under-runs for both the irrigation and non-irrigation season. It
63 would help with potential over-runs in the future. Altenhofen asked about Table 2.1 and 2008
64 acreage – should it be 200,447 instead of 193,266. Hoobler said yes. Kenny said to keep the date,
65 fix the table, and circulate the updated report to the WAC. **Everyone agreed on the approach
66 for the adjustment to Table 2.1.**

67
68 **Water Action Plan Update**

69 Courtney said the ED Office has been working with Water Action Plan Subgroup to go through
70 the 2000 Reconnaissance WAP and have identified additional data needs, costs, etc. and some
71 things have changed significantly since the original document. We have an updated working plan
72 with WAPS to be reviewed by the WAC. **The goal is to have an updated WAP by the end of
73 the year, so we will need to have a draft out by November, probably in the form of a
74 collection of memos summarizing the projects.** We need to prioritize the thirteen projects so
75 we can hit the ground running with them at the same time. The ED Office is identifying RFPs to
76 get feasibility projects going and to determine budgetary needs. A handout was provided with the
77 thirteen projects prioritized into three tiers based on the May WAPS meeting, with a brief verbal
78 update on each:

79
80 For WAP-2, Water Leasing in Nebraska, Kenny said he's been looking into water markets,
81 leasing mechanisms, auctions, etc. to establish a fair market value and development of programs
82 for leasing water. The Program would most likely initiate efforts with a water holder group –
83 CNPPID, NPPD, etc. Schellpeper said NDNR is using some stimulus money to contract with
84 HDR to look into some similar concepts. **Schellpeper said that she will fill Kenny in on this**



85 **effort.**

86

87 WAP-3, Water Management Incentives, entails conversion from one use to another, most likely
88 agriculture. Kenny spoke with Robert Meaney with Valmont, who is also the industry
89 representative this year for the Center Pivot Industry in Nebraska, and there is interest in
90 sustaining irrigated agriculture, but to make the systems more water efficient. Additional sensor
91 technology could decrease the water used and increase the yield to the river rather than taking
92 irrigated land out of production. The center pivot industry is interested in providing funding for
93 research. **Kenny is setting up a meeting with Darrel Martin and Dean Eisenhower at UNL
94 to talk about these concepts and how to analyze yield.**

95

96 Courtney said that all Tier III projects are potentially viable, but they're not identified to be
97 actively worked on right now. **For La Prele (WAP-12), we should contact that group and see
98 if there's any information to obtain.**

99

100 **Colorado Depletions Plan Update**

101 Kowalski circulated an email prior to the meeting providing a summary of what Colorado is
102 doing to meet their obligation of 350 ac-ft for Federal depletions. They are interested in
103 modifying the Depletions Plan to incorporate a Federal offset for the North Platte and they are
104 planning to bring it to the GC in August. Water users would need to get certification to use
105 water. The assumptions haven't changed for water, it's just taking multiple buckets of water and
106 putting them all into one bucket, similar to the Wyoming plan. **The WAC approved a motion to
107 recommend that the GC approve Colorado's proposal.**

108

109 Altenhofen gave a presentation on the accounting tools for Colorado's Depletions Plan.
110 Tamarack I entails 10,000 ac-ft/yr of re-timing flows dependent on excesses at Grand Island.
111 Tamarack II is Colorado's Plan for future depletions. Stream accretions from population growth
112 are retimed on a monthly basis to offset depletions in the months of May and June. SPWRAP
113 funds the process with about \$1M collected each year. Tamarack III is a potential Water Action
114 Plan project and that is dependent on excess flows at Grand Island and may provide up to 17,000
115 ac-ft/yr. Tamarack III would be paid for by the PRRIP.

116

117 Closer tracking with SPWRAP would be beneficial. We need to project ahead to be aware of the
118 future and how rapidly Colorado is using up water. **Anderson asked for further discussion
119 with maybe Kevin Urie, Vana-Miller, and Altenhofen.**

120

121 Kwapnioski asked if the objective is for the WAC to concur that Colorado's assumptions are
122 appropriate. Altenhofen said yes, and asked if it is agreed they are appropriate assumptions for
123 the next five year plan, that Colorado would like approval to take it forward. He asked if
124 everyone would like the opportunity to submit comments. **Kwapnioski recommended everyone
125 think it over, get comments to Altenhofen within a month and for him to provide a memo
126 with assumptions for approval to Courtney to distribute, and then to discuss approval at
127 the next meeting.**

128



129 **Miscellaneous Water Plan Updates**

130 Kenny said the weed management at the choke point along the North Platte is going to be a cost
131 share with West Central Weed Management Agency and it is scheduled to occur this fall. The
132 ED Office will oversee the work and the PRRIP will provide money. He provided an update on
133 channel capacity and weed management from North Platte to Grand Island and said there have
134 been discussions with Rich Walters (Coordinator for Platte Valley Weed Management Agency)
135 regarding a budget estimate and matching funds. It's estimated to cost \$300,000 - \$500,000 to
136 clear from Grand Island to North Platte, which is about \$50 - \$100/ac. A similar amount is likely
137 to complete clearing from McConaughy to Columbus.

138
139 Courtney said the target flow analysis is being updated based on several suggestions received at
140 the May 2009 WAPS meeting. ED Office staff is meeting with Anderson late this week to
141 review the updates. The ED Office is also working with Mike Thompson at NDNR to interpret
142 several aspects of the analysis.

143
144 Courtney said the April 2009 Flow Routing Test report is being developed in collaboration with
145 Anderson and USFWS. **A report is being prepared for the October GC meeting and will be**
146 **provided to the WAC in September for review beforehand.**

147
148 Courtney said a proposal for Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Qualifications for water resources
149 services is being developed for relatively small projects (under \$50K) so that a less lengthy RFP
150 process could be used for those projects.

151
152 **Additional Business**

153 Frank asked if there is anything else that needs to be addressed or if anyone has suggestions. No
154 comments were made. The meeting was adjourned.