



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

4
5 **May 19, 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 Laura Belanger – ED Office/Headwaters Corp
12 Cory Steinke – CNPPID
13 Dennis Strauch – Upper Platte Water Users/Pathfinder Irrigation District (phone)
14 Don Anderson – US Fish & Wildlife Service
15 Duane Hovorka – Environmental Groups/National Wildlife Federation
16 Jennifer Schellpeper – Nebraska DNR
17 Jim Hall – State of Colorado/Colorado DWR (phone)
18 Jon Altenhofen – Colorado Water Users/Northern Colorado WCD
19 Kent Miller – Downstream Water Users/Twin Platte NRD (phone)
20 Mahonri Williams – Bureau of Reclamation
21 Matt Hoobler – Wyoming SEO (phone)
22 Mike Besson – Wyoming Water Development Office
23 Mike Drain – CNPPID
24 Rich Holloway – Tri-Bain NRD (phone)
25 Chad Smith – ED Office/Headwaters Corp (phone)
26 Pat O’Brien – Nebraska Association of Resource Districts
27 Bill Taddicken – Environmental Groups/Rowe Sanctuary (phone)

28
29 **Other Attendees**

30 Larry Reynolds – Tri-Basin NRD
31 Jim Schneider – Nebraska DNR
32 Pat Goltl – Nebraska DNR
33 Matt Rabbe – US Fish & Wildlife Service

34
35 **Welcome and Administrative**

36 Introductions; no agenda modifications. **The January WAC Action Items were approved.**

37
38 **April 2009 Flow Routing Test**

39 Jerry reported on the Program’s April 2009 flow routing test. He noted that the primary
40 objective was to test institutional arrangements and the Program’s ability to make a short
41 duration high flows (SDHF) release. The test was very successful and went smoothly. Jerry
42 thanked CNPPID, NPPD, NDNR, FWS, and others for their efforts. He noted that the weather
43 cooperated which should provide a pretty clean dataset to evaluate travel times, losses, and
44 phragmites impacts. The test revealed that the North Platte choke point was able to



45 accommodate 1,700 to 1,800 cfs at the North Platte gage, which was more than had been
46 anticipated. However the Program still needs more capacity at this location and is committed to
47 re-establishing 3,000 cfs. Water was released from Keystone starting April 9 through the 16th;
48 some flow was to charge the CNPPID and NPPD systems. Flows at Overton in excess of 3,700
49 cfs were maintained for more than a day. At Grand Island, flows in excess of 3,300 cfs were
50 sustained for most of a three day period.

51

52 **The ED Office, working with the FWS, will create a report on the flow routing test.**

53

54 AMWG SDHF Release Workshop Update

55 Don reported that an Adaptive Management Workgroup (AMWG) workshop was held a few
56 weeks ago. He also noted that the group is using the terminology “short duration high flows”
57 (SDHF) rather than “pulse flows” to describe the 2 to 5 day flow objectives. The group covered
58 the flow routing test and then looked at developing a 5 year plan. This included scheduling, goals
59 regarding Adaptive Management Plan (AMP) hypothesis testing, and timing AMP activities with
60 other Program activities. The group decided not to attempt another SDHF until some of the
61 sediment augmentation and other AMP channel efforts are in place. The earliest this would take
62 place would be in 2011.

63

64 Target Flow Calculations

65 The ED Office identified a discrepancy between the Water Plan Reference Materials in
66 Appendices A-5 and E in wet years in May and July. Appendix E is simpler and widely referred
67 to. In wet years, periods in Appendix A-5 (May 20 – 26 target of 4,900 cfs and May 27 – June
68 20 target of 3,400 cfs) were averaged to 3,700 cfs to fit into the Appendix E May 20 – June 20
69 period. This resulted in a shifting of the weight of total monthly target flows between May and
70 June in wet years. Additionally, the seven days of higher targets were lost. Don reviewed a 1996
71 Platte River technical workgroup memo (prepared by Jon Altenhofen) that proposed the 4,900
72 cfs target for 7 days and then a 3,400 cfs target for the remaining days. He also noted that the
73 discrepancy hasn’t impacted anything yet. Don asked that the WAC makes a recommendation
74 that Appendix E be adjusted to reflect wet year A-5 flows. This recommendation will then be
75 taken to the GC for approval. Don informed that group that all of these target flows trace back to
76 a 1994 series of workshops led by the FWS. **The ED Office, working with the FWS, will draft
77 a recommendation to modify Appendix E to be consistent with Appendix A-5, circulate it
78 by email for comments and then conduct an email poll, prior to submitting it to the GC for
79 approval.** Beorn noted that Nebraska’s Depletion Plan would also need to be updated as it
80 includes a table similar to Appendix E. Jennifer said that Nebraska’s documentation states that if
81 the GC changes the target flows that Nebraska would also make this change at the same time. **A
82 motion was made to move ahead as directed in the memo provided by Don and draft
83 something for the WAC to review and then ultimately take it to the GC. The WAC voted
84 in support of the motion.**

85

86 Hydrologic Conditions Analysis Discussion

87 Jerry noted that the FWS hydrologic conditions are based upon equations using numerous
88 variables including snowpack, storage in Lake McConaughy, Grand Island streamflow, etc. This



89 condition determines the target flows. The flow routing test raised the question of whether
90 adjustments should be made and, if so, how should this be done. This could get complicated. It
91 was also noted that the factors for Lake McConaughy storage and Grand Island flows are not
92 weighed equally so calculation are driven more by flow than storage. **The WAC decided that,**
93 **for now, no adjustments would be made and Don will use the existing equations.** This item
94 will be addressed by the WAPS at a future meeting. It is not very time sensitive but needs to be
95 addressed prior to the next flow routing test in 2011.

96

97 **Water Action Plan Updates**

98 Beorn reported that the Program has RFPs out for J-2 and Elwood reregulation reservoir
99 alternatives screening studies. The Program is taking a phased approach on these studies. The
100 current RFPs are for consultants to work through conceptual alternatives and prefeasibility
101 analysis. The next phase would include geotechnical investigations and field work.

102

103 **WAPS Progress**

104 Beorn gave an update on WAPS progress. The group has reviewed all WAP projects for yield,
105 costs, and timing. When new info could be gathered, data was updated. No projects have been
106 removed and this afternoon the WAPS will discuss adding an Elm Creek Reservoir project.

107

108 **Depletions Plans**

109 Beorn noted that she had circulated a file with inventory of what has been received and what is
110 anticipated based upon what is identified in the depletions plans. She summarized the following:

111

112 WY – The ED Office circulated some information provided by WY. No comments have been
113 received from the WAC. There is nothing new waiting to be reviewed by the WAC at this time,
114 however Wyoming has informed the ED Office that it will bring an amendment request to the
115 GC in June. If the GC requests input from the WAC, discussion can take place at the next WAC
116 meeting in July.

117

118 CO – Colorado circulated their cumulative affect report in April. The GC requested the WAC to
119 review this report at the April GC meeting.

120

121 NE – Last items were provided in December. There are outstanding items that will likely be
122 provided in August.

123

124 Federal – Their end of year report was circulated previously. Nothing is outstanding.

125

126 Because Colorado just recently provided their Depletions Plan, Beorn noted that it was added to
127 the agenda to discuss. Colorado and the GC have requested the WAC to review and comment.
128 Colorado and potentially Wyoming will present at the next WAC meeting in July. **A deadline**
129 **should be set for the WAC to get comments to Jon prior to his Colorado presentation so**
130 **he's able to more effectively address them. Jon will also provide an overview on how the**
131 **Colorado depletions plan works.**

132



133 Wyoming will be up next for depletions plan reporting. **The July 21 meeting was changed to a**
134 **full day WAC meeting to deal with CO and WY and another other items that need to be**
135 **addressed. The meeting will be held at the visitor’s center in Ogallala. A recommendation**
136 **will then be made to the GC regarding these two plans so everyone should try to attend.**
137
138 The meeting was adjourned.