



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 **November 17, 2009**
6

7 **Attendance**

- 8 Cory Steinke – WAC Chair, CNPPID
9 Jerry Kenny – Executive Director, Headwaters Corp
10 Beorn Courtney – ED Office/Headwaters Corp
11 Laura Belanger – ED Office/Headwaters Corp
12 Jason Farnsworth – ED Office/Headwaters Corp
13 Steve Smith – ED Office/Headwaters Corp
14 Frank Kwapnioski –NPPD
15 Dennis Strauch – Upper Platte Water Users/Pathfinder Irrigation District
16 Jennifer Schellpeper – Nebraska DNR
17 Jon Altenhofen – Colorado Water Users/Northern Colorado WCD
18 Greg Wingfield – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
19 Mahonri Williams – Bureau of Reclamation
20 Mike Besson – Wyoming Water Development Office
21 Mike Drain – CNPPID
22 Rich Holloway – Tri-Bain NRD
23 Pat Goltl – Nebraska DNR
24 Duane Hovorka – National Wildlife Federation
25 Brock Merrill – Bureau of Reclamation
26 Jeff Runge – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
27 Matt Rabbe – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
28 David Ford – CNPPID
29 Ann Bleed – CDR Associates
30 Eric Dove – Olsson Associates
31 Don Beesley – Olsson Associates
32 Deb Ohlinger – Olsson Associates
33 Joan Darling – Olsson Associates
34 Michael Yost – Olsson Associates
35 Bill Hahn – Hahn Water Resources
36 John Engel - HDR
37 George Oamek – Honey Creek Resources
38
39



40 **Welcome and Administrative**

41 Introductions were made. There were no agenda modifications. Beorn Courtney thanked Frank
42 Kwapnioski, who is retiring and resigned as chair, for all his work as chair of the committee.

43 **Cory Steinke was nominated and approved as the new chair. Jeff Runge will be the FWS**
44 **WAC member replacing Don Anderson.** The WAC membership list was sent around for the
45 group to update. **The September WAC Minutes were approved without modifications.**

46

47 **CNPPID Reregulating Reservoir Feasibility**

48 Jason told the group that the project was to evaluate the use and potential modification of
49 Elwood and a new J-2 Return area reservoir. Olsson Associates was selected to conduct both
50 studies. The schedule was very aggressive due to the importance of a reservoir for short duration
51 high flows (SDHFs). Also pre-irrigation season field work is critical to the next project phase
52 and we don't want to miss the 2010 field work season. Olsson reviewed alternatives, modeling,
53 assumptions and results. The yields in the report for target flows assume that excess flows are
54 used to reduce shortages to target flows and that EA water or excess flows are used to fill
55 reservoirs prior to SDHFs. J-2 alternative 2 (Areas A and B) scored well in many areas so rose
56 to the top. Olsson recommended either eliminating Elwood or incorporating it with very little
57 money spent on it. **The WAC will further evaluate the results to decide exactly what**
58 **reservoirs will be moved forward to full feasibility. Regarding permitting issues, Jerry said**
59 **he will have a conversation with the COE about permitting in the near future. He**
60 **confirmed with the WAC, that if the report is cleaned up, they are in support of taking this**
61 **presentation to the GC in December.**

62

63 Olsson will provide final study results to **Laura who will develop a short project summary for**
64 **the GC meeting and for the WAC to be circulated next week. WAC members will provide**
65 **comments for the presentation to Laura by the end of the week which she will compile and**
66 **provide to Olsson for the GC meeting.** Olsson will revise their presentation for the GC to be
67 around 45 minutes, including time for questions. The message for the GC will be that the WAC
68 is in general support of the J-2 alternatives. For the next version of the report, an Executive
69 Summary with recommendations and maps will be developed by Olsson, with alternatives
70 clearly identified on them. **If WAC members have comments on the current report version**
71 **they should provide them to Laura by the end of this week.** Discussion regarding the timing
72 of next steps regarding the report resulted in the decision that **the ED Office will work with**
73 **Olsson to develop a reorganized and more final version of the report which will be**
74 **provided to the WAC in the next month or so.** The WAC will then have several weeks to
75 review and provide comments. Edits will be made in response to WAC comments prior to
76 providing the report to the GC for the March meeting. **Approval for the Reregulating**
77 **Reservoir report will be done electronically.**

78

79 **Nebraska Ground Water Recharge Feasibility**

80 Steve reported on the Nebraska (NE) Ground Water (GW) recharge pre-feasibility study. Bill
81 Hahn is doing this work with a workgroup of WAC members. They are looking at Gothenburg
82 and Dawson County, as well as the Phelps County Canal which is an addition from the



83 Reconnaissance-Level WAP. They are selecting sites and estimating yields and return flow
84 timing. The study will be complete by the end of the year. The next step will be a thorough
85 feasibility study with demonstration projects likely at one or two sites. **They'll get an RFP for**
86 **the feasibility study to the GC for their March 2010 meeting.** Demonstration projects would
87 probably start in the spring or summer of 2010.

88

89 Appendix A-5 Target Flows

90 **The WAC passed a motion to approve a memo for the GC recommending that Appendix E**
91 **in the Program Document be revised to be consistent with A-5 in the Program Document.**

92 This issue had previously been discussed in detail with the WAC which had asked to review the
93 recommendation memo prior to it being provided to the GC.

94

95 Flow Routing Report

96 Cory asked the group if they had any comments on the report and noted that event outcomes had
97 previously been discussed with the group. No comments were provided. **If WAC members**
98 **have comments, they need to provide them to Laura by the end of the week. She will then**
99 **get a revised draft to the GC prior to their December meeting.**

100

101 Water Action Plan Update

102 Beorn discussed the WAP Update. Beorn reminded the group that Program Milestone 4 is to
103 achieve 130,000 – 150,000 af/yr by 2019, including 80,000 af/yr from the three initial water
104 projects. WAP projects must provide 50,000 – 70,000 af/yr. There is an interim goal of 25,000
105 af/yr by 2014. The Program document also requires a WAP update by end of year three of the
106 Program which is 2009. We updated costs and yields, identified new issues and added an
107 implementation schedule. Beorn also noted that the original WAP did not look at projects'
108 ability to augment a SDHF. Generally project costs are higher than estimated in the
109 Reconnaissance-Level WAP. She also reviewed excess flow calculations and current
110 methodology being used in feasibility studies. We've been focused on the CNPPID reregulating
111 reservoir due to its ability to help meet SDHF requirements. As we move forward and as other
112 projects advance, it's going to be very important to integrate the different projects in analysis of
113 supply.

114

115 Beorn reviewed the WAP Project Sequencing Schedule and discussed project tiers. All Tier 1
116 projects are currently being advanced. Information is being collected on Tier 2 projects which
117 will help them advance. Tier 3 projects are currently not being advanced but work will be done
118 on them in the future. This is a working document with many unknowns. Tier 1 projects are
119 estimated in the update to yield from around 57,000 to 63,000 af/yr, though this doesn't account
120 for NE and project partners taking a portion. How much they will be interested in is currently
121 unknown.

122

123 George Oamek helped update project costs. Beorn reviewed project costs and noted that we will
124 be above the Water Plan Budget of \$90 million assuming the current schedule and all the
125 projects are implemented. She concluded that WAP projects will likely produce the yields



126 needed and that the Water Plan budget likely will suffice with certain combinations of projects
127 and not with others. She also noted that much of the information in this WAP Update will
128 continue to be updated as new information is learned. Jerry stated that this document is very
129 important as we determine where we go from here and emphasized that this is a living document
130 which will be constantly updated.

131
132 In response to discussion about the way projects will be scored on the 1947 – 1994 hydrology
133 period, Beorn explained that feasibility studies will also evaluate the recent drier hydrology to
134 provide information that may affect operations. To provide more information on how the scoring
135 period compares to more recent hydrology, **the ED Office will generate flow duration curves
136 looking at Excess Flows for recent periods as compared to the 1947 – 1994 period.**

137
138 **Colorado (CO) GW Management will not be completed by 2014 so this needs to be changed
139 in the update. Table 2 needs some editing regarding when projects will be completed. The
140 ED Office will redo yield estimates to route water from Pathfinder and Glendo to Lake
141 Mac in September. The range of losses will then be applied.**

142
143 Jon raised a question about Programs costs for NCCW. It appears that the Program must pay for
144 all the cost for the project but only gets the NCCW, not all the conservation savings. CNPPID is
145 getting benefits from these projects. **Mike Drain will forward sections of their FERC license
146 which discuss NCCW to Jon.** Mike noted that though costs are high, the yield is known and
147 available. Mike said that CNPPID might be open to negotiating for something different but
148 noted that their FERC license is the starting point. **The ED Office will clarify in the WAP
149 update how NCCW costs are different from other projects because of how they are
150 calculated.**

151
152 **Regarding the reregulating reservoir project, the ED Office will average results for the dry,
153 average and wet years and present this as the average value in the WAP update.**

154
155 **The ED Office will provide the GC with an executive summary and presentation. The
156 WAP update will be revised after the GC presentation. WAC members should get
157 comments to Beorn this week if possible for the GC presentation. Another draft will be
158 provided to the WAC for comments and approval at the February WAC meeting.**

159 **Available Flow Analysis**

160
161 Jennifer gave the group an update on work DNR had been doing with HDR regarding
162 unappropriated water. They are developing a daily Excel-based planning tool so any applicant
163 coming into DNR could use the tool to evaluate unappropriated water. They are taking a very
164 conservative approach entering water rights data per the appropriated rather than historical
165 diversions and use.

166
167



168 **2010 Water Plan Budget**

169 Jerry reviewed water project draft work plans and budgets, which were provided to the WAC
170 prior to the meeting. The total water budget is about \$3,450,000 out of a total Program budget of
171 about \$17,000,000. **If anyone has comments or edits, get them to Jerry. Jerry will add**
172 **additional details regarding project specifics to the work plan.** The budget will be provided
173 to the Finance Committee next Tuesday.

174

175 **Additional Business**

176 **The following dates were set for 2010 WAC meetings: February 16th, May 11th, Aug 17th,**
177 **October 12th, and November 9th.**

178

179 **The ED Office will send these dates to the WAC.**

180

181 The meeting was adjourned.