



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

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5
6 **September 15, 2009**

7
8 **Attendance**

9 Frank Kwapnioski – WAC Chair, NPPD
10 Jerry Kenny – Executive Director, Headwaters Corp
11 Beorn Courtney – ED Office/Headwaters Corp
12 Laura Belanger – ED Office/Headwaters Corp
13 Cory Steinke – CNPPID
14 Dennis Strauch – Upper Platte Water Users/Pathfinder Irrigation District
15 Don Anderson – US Fish & Wildlife Service
16 Duane Hovorka – Environmental Groups/National Wildlife Federation
17 Duane Woodward – Downstream Water Users/Central Platte NRD
18 Jim Schneider – Nebraska DNR
19 Jennifer Schellpeper – Nebraska DNR (phone)
20 Jon Altenhofen – Colorado Water Users/Northern Colorado WCD
21 Kent Miller – Downstream Water Users/Twin Platte NRD
22 Mahonri Williams – Bureau of Reclamation (phone)
23 Matt Hoobler – Wyoming SEO (phone)
24 Mike Besson – Wyoming Water Development Office
25 Mike Drain – CNPPID
26 Rich Holloway – Tri-Bain NRD
27 Bill Taddicken – Environmental Groups/Rowe Sanctuary
28 Pat Goltl – Nebraska DNR

29
30 **Other Attendees**

31 Ann Bleed – CDR Associates
32

33 **Welcome and Administrative**

34 Introductions. No agenda modifications. Schellpeper had several edits to the meeting notes
35 which Beorn reviewed. Anderson verbally requested several edits to the meeting notes. **The**
36 **July WAC Action Item Minutes (i.e., meeting minutes) were approved.** Kenny informed the
37 group that Ann Bleed, who was present, has been retained by the ED Office as a special advisor
38 for Nebraska water rights and associated administrative processes.

39
40 **Colorado Depletions Plan**

41 Altenhofen addressed comments on Colorado’s depletions plan reporting, related to the
42 Cumulative Effects Report dated April 30, 2009. Altenhofen previously gave a presentation
43 regarding the accounting tools at the July WAC meeting, at which time the WAC requested



44 additional information specifically related to the changes in assumptions for which Colorado was
45 seeking approval. Altenhofen provided a follow-up memo dated August 6, 2009, with a
46 summary of the revised assumptions that were described in the April 30, 2009 report.
47 Altenhofen provided a new handout at the September 15, 2009 WAC meeting, addressing
48 comments received. Colorado is requesting approval of two changes in assumptions: a
49 modification of the gross per capita water requirement and a modification of the percentage of
50 mixes of the 6 water sources.

51

52 **Anderson will provide Altenhofen a copy of the Hydrosphere report.**

53

54 **Altenhofen will more explicitly state in Colorado's Depletion Report that the augmentation**
55 **plans have not led to an increase in irrigated acreage or consumptive use. He will also**
56 **clarify that there is no new information that would lead to a change in assumptions with**
57 **the exception of those identified regarding the two proposed assumptions changes.**

58

59 **The WAC motioned to recommend approval to the GC of the two revised assumptions as**
60 **presented in Colorado's August 6, 2009 memo to the WAC. The motion was approved.**
61 **Kwapnioski asked if the WAC also wanted to accept the Plan as presented. The WAC**
62 **agreed to receive the report.** Ted Kowalski (State of Colorado) supported the WAC approvals
63 (via phone).

64

65 Water Action Plan Update

66 Courtney noted that the ED Office won't go into great detail about the projects today. She noted
67 that as we get into feasibility studies for several projects, questions are being identified. For
68 example, Excess to Target Flows are a source for several Water Action Plan (WAP) projects.
69 The ED Office is working on a memo to describe how to quantify excess flows with a smaller
70 subgroup. Also the ED Office and subgroups are working to update project yields at the habitat.
71 The ED Office is also working with AECOM to confirm that new yields can be compared
72 consistently with the yields presented in older reports. The ED Office has contracted with an
73 economist, George Oamek, to evaluate project costs and ensure they are comparable or if not,
74 that this is appropriate. Courtney mentioned that the GC asked how projects used for short
75 duration high flows (SDHF) and target flows would be scored. The 2000 WAP doesn't discuss
76 SDHF at all as this concept wasn't integrated at that time. The ED Office thinks it makes sense
77 to consider integrating SDHF in how the projects will be scored because this is key to how many
78 projects will be designed and to the initial focus in which project to advance at the early stages of
79 the Program. Anderson discussed if there should be a bonus/credit given to projects with SDHF
80 purposes. This would require a policy shift.

81

82 CNPPID Reregulating Reservoirs

83 Courtney reported that we are working on the CNPPID Reregulating Reservoirs pre-feasibility
84 study with a smaller workgroup. Olsson will be looking at the project for both SDHF and target
85 flows as well as other potential benefits such as hydrocycling. There will be a presentation of
86 results either before the October GC meeting or adjacent to the November WAC meeting. **The**



87 **ED Office will check on the time and date of the Olsson reregulation reservoir**
88 **presentation.** This is a 1st tier project that we're moving forward with.

89

90 Water Leasing

91 Kenny reported on Water Leasing in Nebraska. The ED Office has enlisted George Oamek to
92 develop a plan for water leasing. Oamek is developing an assessment of a fair value of water.
93 He is working with University of Nebraska at Lincoln and Colorado State University professors.
94 The ED Office will probably contact additional individuals at the University of Wyoming's
95 Agricultural Economy Department. Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District
96 (CNPPID) and Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) have indicated a willingness to explore
97 water leasing opportunities. Water leasing in Nebraska is a 2nd tier WAP project because the
98 process needs to be developed.

99

100 Water Management Incentives

101 Kenny reported that The ED Office is working with Nebraska DNR, UNL, and Flatwater to
102 determine how to incentivize and to make sure there's good value to the river and that other
103 users are not being injured. This is 2nd tier WAP project because it will take a while to define and
104 implement.

105

106 Dry Creek/Fort Kearny Cutoffs

107 Kenny reported the project's water source has decreased and as a result, the focus has now
108 shifted. The Funk Lagoon component of this project no longer viable. The Kapa ethanol plant
109 has a waste line that runs parallel to the river. Using active groundwater management and
110 outputting water into that line could provide a new project in cooperation with Tri-Basin NRD.
111 We'd need to do careful accounting to ensure that the project would have a net positive effect
112 and are in the exploratory stage of discussing this with Tri-Basin NRD. This was a 1st tier WAP
113 project because it sounded simple, but it has quickly gotten more complex.

114

115 Dawson/Gothenburg (and potentially Phelps County Canal) Groundwater Recharge

116 Courtney reported that this project is in the pre-feasibility stage. There's a workgroup and the
117 ED Office is working with Bill Hahn on this. The plan is to have updated yields and costs by the
118 end of the year. This is a 1st tier WAP project.

119

120 Groundwater Management Active Pumping

121 Courtney reported that this is a tier 2 WAP and we are learning information under other WAP
122 pre-feasibility studies that will assist us in better defining this WAP project.

123

124 Net Controllable Conserved Water (NCCW)

125 Courtney reported that the ED Office is working with CNPPID to update costs. NCCW will be a
126 lot more expensive than we thought but it is something CNPPID is already doing so it could be
127 available as soon as the Program and CNPPID can get a contract in place.

128

129



130 Pathfinder Municipal Account & Glendo

131 Courtney reported this is a tier 1 WAP project and the ED office is working with Wyoming to
132 update information.

133

134 Tamarack III

135 Courtney reported this is a tier 1 WAP project and the ED office is working with Colorado to
136 update information.

137

138 **The ED Office plans to bring a draft of the updated WAP to the WAC in November and**
139 **then a draft to the GC in December for approval.**

140

141 Initial 2010 Budget Estimates

142 Courtney showed a draft 2010 PRRIP Water Plan Related Budget table with proposed budget
143 items. The total draft budget is \$2,900,000. Jerry walked the group through the line items and
144 their descriptions including assumptions.

145

146 North Platte Choke Point Update

147 Jerry provided an update on information obtained from SEH. We had assumed the choke point
148 capacity was being constrained in the reach below the highway bridge by phragmites. It now
149 appears, based on preliminary modeling that in addition to constricting vegetation, there has been
150 sand deposition in the bed. In other locations, once phragmites clearing occurs, the bed
151 remobilizes which clears out some of the deposition. Clearing the North Platte choke point is
152 intended to increase the capacity there to at least 3,000 cfs or maybe 4,000 cfs if possible.
153 Steinke suggested that it may be good to time additional discing or ripping right before irrigation
154 season to help mobilize areas of sand deposition.

155

156 Flow Routing Report

157 Belanger told the group that the FWS and ED Office have been working on a report for the April
158 2009 flow routing event. A draft report will be provided to the group prior to the November
159 WAC meeting. The report will then be provided to the GC prior to their December meeting.

160 **The ED Office will update the report to clearly state that the 2009 event's primary goal was**
161 **to test implementation and coordination.**

162

163 Additional Business

164 Frank asked if there was anything else that needed to be addressed. Courtney reminded the group
165 that that the UNL Platte River Symposium is being held adjacent to the October GC meeting.
166 This is included on the WAC schedule. **The next WAC meeting, assuming the reregulation**
167 **reservoir report is made adjacent to the GC meeting, will in Ogallala on November 17. The**
168 **EAC/RCC meeting will be moved to the 18th.**

169

170 The meeting was adjourned.