Republican River Basin-Wide Plan
Stakeholder Advisory Meeting Minutes
June 21, 2016 | Community Center; Cambridge, Nebraska

Stakeholder Advisory Committee members in attendance were:

Jared Baker
Mike Delka
Brad Edgerton
Troy Fletcher
Dale Helms
Dick Helms
Robin Hinrichs
William (Bill) Hoyt
Max Kaiser
Jim Kent
Bradly Knuth
Jerry Kuenning
Kent Lorens
Gale Lush
Colin Lutz for Scott Lutz
Timothy McCoy
Cedric McDaniel
Dave Oxford
Roric Paulman
John Rundel
Nate Schneider
Richard Siel
Daniel Smith
Shad Stamm
Aaron Thompson
Ted Tietjen
Marcia Trompke
Jerda Vickers
Tom Vickers
Todd Watson

Plan Development Team members in attendance were:

John Thorburn
Ray Winz
Mike Clements
Scott Dicke
Sylvia Johnson
Jack Russell
Nate Jenkins
Jeff Fassett
Carol Flaute
Jennifer Schellpeper
Amy Zoller
Beth Eckles
Kathy Benson
Emily Bausch
Phyllis Johnson

Individuals from the community present during the meeting included:

Chelsea Erickson
Mark Christensen
Jean Eichhorst

Note: See Attachment A for a copy of the sign-in sheets.

NOTICE OF THE MEETING

Notice of the meeting was published on the Department of Natural Resources web site (dnr.nebraska.gov) and the project website (dnr.nebraska.gov/RRBWP/). Notices were also published in the Holdrege Daily Citizen, McCook Gazette, Imperial Republican, and the Benkelman Post & News Chronicle.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

The following informational materials were distributed to stakeholders:

- June 21, 2016, meeting agenda
- January 19, 2016, draft meeting minutes
- March 15, 2016, draft meeting minutes
- Draft summary of April 2016 coordination meeting
- *Department of Natural Resources Rules for Surface Water*, *Title 457*, *Neb. Admin. Code*, Chapter 24, Determination of Fully Appropriated Basins, Sub-Basins, or Reaches
- Statutory Guidelines for the Republican River basin-wide planning process and stakeholder participation, summarized from *Neb. Rev. Stat.* § 46-755
- Challenges Discussion/Activity

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1. WELCOME

- NeDNR Director Jeff Fassett welcomed everyone and expressed his gratitude for the good feedback in the March meeting. Jennifer Schellpeper, NeDNR, reviewed the agenda, which was approved by the group. The stakeholders were given 15 days to review and comment on the January and March draft meeting minutes prior to their finalization.
- John Thorburn of Tri-Basin NRD gave updates on the proposed Platte-Republican diversion project. He reported that contracting is in the final stages with Olsson Associates for the feasibility study, which will look at the area of E65 Canal to Turkey Creek. The study is to be complete in a six-month time period.
- Schellpeper invited the group to the Annual Republican River Compact Meeting being held in Burlington, Colorado on August 25th, 2016. Details about the meeting will be posted on the NDNR website.

2. EFFECTIVE PROCESS

- Schellpeper went over the March 16th draft minutes and gave an overview of the tables contained within the minutes, which summarize stakeholder feedback from the March 16th meeting, organized by discussion topic within the categories of Process, Challenges, Opportunities, and Studies and Education.
- Schellpeper explained that the process-related concerns raised at the March meeting fit within five focus areas:
    1. a lack of clarity on group purpose,
    2. frustration with the process,
    3. appreciation for open discussions,
    4. frustration with not addressing the real issues, and

5. wanting to discuss possible solutions.

She then outlined a path for moving forward and responding to those five areas of concern:

1. clarify the group's purpose,
2. define an effective process to guide meetings,
3. provide opportunities for open discussion,
4. identify and discuss issues important to the group, and
5. discuss solutions and opportunities.

Group Purpose

- There was much discussion about the hydrologically connected area (i.e., 10/50 area), and whether the basin-wide plan should apply to the portion of the basin outside the hydrologically connected area. The group was reminded thatareas outside the 10/50 area are still part of Compact compliance and are affected by the NRDs' individual IMPs. This topic was placed in the Parking Lot for later discussion.
- There was much discussion about the definition of sustainability and the difference between sustainability and the statute language of "sustaining a balance." During this discussion, Mark Christensen—who was involved with drafting LB1098—was asked to speak about how the word "sustainability" fit within the context of the history of the bill and its legislative intent.
- Schellpeper presented the following statement to the group as a "straw dog" of the group's purpose: "to be part of the process to develop a water management plan for the basin." She asked for input from the group, who agreed with this statement of group purpose.

Group Procedures

- Schellpeper asked the group how they wanted to continue the meetings
- The group decided:
  - They prefer open, large group discussions over small groups,
  - To continue with the 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. time-frame,
  - To continue meeting every other month for one additional year (6 additional meetings),
  - That stakeholder responsibilities include to show up on time, read meeting materials in advance of the meeting, and be prepared for discussion,
  - They prefer that meeting materials be sent to stakeholders at least 10 days before the meeting, and
  - That group decisions will be made by consensus.
- The method of voting agreed upon consists of each stakeholder holding their thumb in the air, pointing up for approval, sideways for "I'm ok with this" and down for a disapproval. Any stakeholders indicating disapproval must describe their concerns and the group will try to come to some compromise to remove the disapproval vote(s). If the disapproval cannot be removed, the group will decide how and whether to proceed from that point.

- The group questioned whether the six remaining meetings would be enough time to make decisions given the time they have already spent meeting. Schellpeper reminded the group that there could be flexibility in adding more meetings if needed.
- There was discussion on the role of the facilitator and if NeDNR could be an unbiased facilitator for this process since they are a regulatory authority. Group consensus voted to keep NeDNR as the facilitator with the option to bring in another facilitator if or when needed.
- Members wanted to know who would be writing the basin-wide plan. Schellpeper stated it is a collaborative effort between Olsson Associates, NRD managers, and NeDNR that will take stakeholder input, guidance from statute, and existing IMPs.
- The group asked for action items for the next meeting.
- There was a request for a spreadsheet that shows the pumping that has already occurred.

3. Challenges and opportunities

- The afternoon session reconvened with a gallery walk activity led by Amy Zoller of NeDNR. The purpose of the activity was to process feedback on basin challenges from the last meeting and begin to focus and prioritize that information. The handout describing the activity is attached as Attachment B.
- Following the wall-writing part of the activity, as described in the instructions, stakeholders were given six green dots and six red dots. They were asked to place up to three green dots on the overall topic areas they agreed with most or thought were most important, up to three green dots on the individual comments they agreed with most or thought were most important, up to three red dots on the overall topic areas they disagreed with most, and up to three red dots on the individual comments they disagreed with most. The results of this activity are presented in Attachment C.
- Then each stakeholder was asked to make a 2 minute statement on their thoughts or concerns about the RRBWP process. Their comments are paraphrased in Attachment D.

4. Litigation

- Fassett provided an update on the current status of the five ongoing lawsuits related to water use in the Republican Basin.
- Fassett described concerns about the cases creating tension and a barrier in moving forward. He credited the group with having good input in the meetings and reiterated that he hopes litigation doesn't get in the way of progress.
- Schellpeper asked the group if they were comfortable moving forward with the planning process given the litigation. Group consensus voted to move forward.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

6. NEXT MEETING

On behalf of the entire basin-wide plan development team, including the four NRDs and

NeDNR, Schellpeper thanked the stakeholders for attending and participating in this process. The next meeting will be held at the Cambridge Community Center from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm on August 16th, 2016. The meetings are scheduled to occur on approximately the third Tuesday every other month at the same location. Meeting agendas, presentations, and meeting minutes will be available on the project website (dnr.nebraska.gov/RRBWP).

Parking Lot

When members of the group brought up topics that should be addressed, but best discussed at another time, they were written down, and placed in the "parking lot" for future discussion. They are:

- Delineation of the basin-wide plan's geographic area
- Dr. Goeke speaking to the group
- NeDNR model information
- History of legislation
- Definition of sustainability

Project Website = http://dnr.nebraska.gov/RRBWP/

ATTACHMENT A

Sign-in sheets

Attachment A

STAKEHOLDER ATTENDANCE RECORD
Republican River Basin-Wide Plan
June 21, 2016 10:00 AM
Community Center -Cambridge, NE

NAME	SIGNATURE	EMAIL	PHONE NO.
Kurt Bernhardt		[redacted]	
Vesta Dack			
Mike Delka			
Brad Edgerton			
Jerry Ehrke			
Chris Flaming			
Troy Fletcher			
Josh Friesen			
Mike George			
Wayne Haarberg			
Dale Helms			
Dick Helms			
Robin Hinrichs			
Bill Hoyt			
Michael J. Kahrs			
Max Kaiser			
Curtis Kayton			
Jim Kent			
Bradly Knuth			

STAKEHOLDER ATTENDANCE RECORD
Republican River Basin-Wide Plan
June 21, 2016 10:00 AM
Community Center -Cambridge, NE

NAME	SIGNATURE	EMAIL	PHONE NO.
Jerry Kuenning	Jerry Kuenning	[redacted]	[redacted]
Kent Lorens	Kent Lorens	[redacted]	[redacted]
Jeff Loschen		[redacted]	[redacted]
Gale Lush	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Scott Lutz	Collin Lutz	[redacted]	[redacted]
Timothy McCoy	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Cedric McDaniel	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Dan Nelsen		[redacted]	[redacted]
Doug Ohlson		[redacted]	[redacted]
Dave Oxford	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Roric Paulman	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
John Rundel		[redacted]	[redacted]
Nate Schneider	Nate Schneider	ns[redacted]	[redacted]
George Schortberger		[redacted]	[redacted]
Richard Siel	Rich Siel	[redacted]	[redacted]
Kevin Slocum		fs[redacted]	[redacted]
Steve Smith		[redacted]	[redacted]
Daniel Smith	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Shad Stamm	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

STAKEHOLDER ATTENDANCE RECORD
Republican River Basin-Wide Plan
June 21, 2016 10:00 AM
Community Center -Cambridge, NE

NAME	SIGNATURE	EMAIL	PHONE NO.
Glenn Taubenheim		[redacted]	[redacted]
Aaron Thompson		[redacted]	[redacted]
Ted Tietjen		[redacted]	[redacted]
Marcia Trompke		[redacted]	[redacted]
Jerda Vickers		[redacted]	[redacted]
Tom Vickers		[redacted]	[redacted]
Todd Watson		[redacted]	[redacted]
		[redacted]	[redacted]
	PUBLIC	[redacted]	[redacted]
Mark Christensen		[redacted]	[redacted]
Jean Eichhorst		[redacted]	[redacted]
		[redacted]	[redacted]
Chelsea Erickson		[redacted]	[redacted]
		[redacted]	[redacted]

STAKEHOLDER ATTENDANCE RECORD
Republican River Basin-Wide Plan
June 21, 2016 10:00 AM
Community Center -Cambridge, NE

NAME	SIGNATURE	AGENCY	EMAIL	PHONE NO.
John Thorburn		Tri-Basin NRD	[redacted]	[redacted]
Ray Winz		Tri-Basin NRD		
Mike Clements		Lower Rep NRD		
Scott Dicke		Lower Rep NRD		
Sylvia Johnson		Middle Rep NRD		
Jack Russell		Middle Rep NRD		
Nate Jenkins		Upper Rep NRD		
Jasper Fanning		Upper Rep NRD		
Carol Flaute		NDNR		
Jennifer Schellpeper		NDNR		
Amy Zoller		NDNR		
Jeff Fassett		NDNR		
		NDNR		
PJoannjohnson@yahoo.com		NDNR		
		TRI Basin		
		Trenton		

ATTACHMENT B

Challenges Activity

Challenges Discussion/Activity (Agenda Item #3)
June 21, 2016 RR BWP Stakeholder Meeting

Purpose of this Activity

- As a whole group, process the feedback we received at the last meeting, categorized as "Basin Challenges"
- Dig deeper into the responses from last meeting related to the Challenges.
- Begin to identify which Challenges the group would like to focus on at subsequent meetings.
- Better understand each other's' viewpoints, including conflicts and agreements.

Activity Description

1) Document Review
   - Take 10 minutes of quiet time to read over the "Challenges" that we summarized from the last meeting (brown table). As you read, circle or jot down notes about the quotes (comments) that you think are most significant, or add in your own.
   - Based on your reading and notes, choose 3 of the most compelling comments that you most want to emphasize for the whole group to consider (could be a quote from the document, or a new quote that you come up with). If possible, have each of the three comments be about a different topic.
2) Wall Writing
   - Take a marker and your notes, and write down your 3 most compelling comments onto the topic sheet that they relate to. The topics are:
     1. *Inequitable distribution of Compact compliance burden (uses, geography, political boundaries).*
     2. *Limited understanding of available water supply and use*
     3. *Regulatory measures have been inconsistent through time, and by water use*
     4. *Compact compliance and accounting—always a challenge*
     5. *Overconsumption of water in the Basin has been inadequately addressed.*
     6. *Lack of certainty for agricultural planning*
     7. *Someone else will fix our problem (east), if we don't fix it ourselves.*
     8. *Loss of economic returns on investments in irrigated agriculture*
     9. *Anything missing? Add it on this blank sheet.*

3) Gallery Walk
   - For the next few minutes, walk around the room and read everything that other people have written. From all that you have read, choose ONE comment that *someone else wrote* (NOT one of your comments) that you agree with most, and one comment that you disagree with most.
4) Whole group discussion questions:
   - From the "topics" (sheets in front of room), what are the most important challenges you would like to be worked on as a part of this plan?
   - What are the "comments" that you agreed with the most? What are comments you disagree with the most?

Activity summary--What Do We Do With the Results of This Activity?

- Appreciate each other's viewpoints. Use these comments as a springboard for further informal discussion among ourselves both during and outside of meetings. Develop a beginning sense of which challenges might be a starting point for prioritization at our next meeting.

“Challenges” Discusssion/Activity for June 21 Stakeholder Meeting

General Topic	Summary	Quotes
1. **Inequitable distribution of Compact compliance burden (uses, geography, political boundaries)**	Many stakeholders expressed that surface water users have suffered the most loss due to lowered stream flows and the burden of compliance, and there is a general lack of awareness from other users and decision makers about what they have given up for the good of the Basin. Cross-boundary (political, hydrologic regulatory boundaries) inequalities have a spectrum of negative consequences for water users (seed corn opportunities, regulation, land value).	"When there's excess water in the Platte and we need water here, why is the burden on wells and surface water here?" "Why is the burden of compliance here instead of on everyone in the state?" "From my perspective, the surface water people have been shut out of the conversation. . . . That's why there are lawsuits. There's no other way to be heard." "The surface water users have paid for those projects to use that water. The Projects were first for flood control, second for irrigation. But the irrigators paid for those." "I don't think people in this room understand what happened with N-CORPE to ensure compliance. I Does everyone understand what was given up? The water's there in the dam, but I can't get it." "The state of Nebraska needs a statewide plan for how to handle recharge to ensure the aquifer for years to come." "There are currently no allocations for areas in the Model area that aren't in the drainage basin. Many people feel this is not very fair when everyone else has allocations." "We need to have an understanding of why some acres were excluded." "Seed corn companies won't plant their seed in Lower Republican . . . . Right across the county line you can plant it."
2. **Limited understanding of available water supply & use**	Several stakeholders feel that we need a better understanding of hydrologic lower and upper limits, which measure/unit is most appropriate within these limits, and where our current condition falls. Stakeholders felt there is not yet enough information available to provide a foundation for planning decisions.	"How much flow is needed at the head gates to sustain your system? Solutions have to be based on science rather than politics." "Surface water guys won't have anything if the focus is on depletions. It makes it look like we depleted it to nothing, and we didn't have anything to do with that." "What's a good metric for fairness and sustainability?" “We need to come to an agreement on how we measure depletions and what we cannot or will not accept." "The allocations given aren't scientifically based. Use the model to get the starting point--what are the inches per acre, with zero flows in the river, and Compact compliance? "In Union precinct, they set a limit of 9 inches because they set IMP limits. Even in dry years, groundwater levels go up. That tells me we can probably use more than 9 inches." "We're trying to build a house without a foundation." 'The way things were. What does that mean? My concern is that a lot of the data is beginning around 1940. Our farming practices have changed dramatically. "None of us know how short we are, so it's difficult to find solutions. What do we work toward?" "We still need to know where we are." "How much flow is needed at the head gates to sustain your system?" "Is it going to be based on the basin area, 10/50 area, or model area?" "We need to have an understanding of why some acres were excluded."

“Challenges” Discusssion/Activity for June 21 Stakeholder Meeting

General Topic	Summary	Quotes
3. Over-consumption in the Basin has not been adequately addressed	Many stakeholders feel there has been and continues to be overconsumption in the basin, but the exact amount is unclear. Any streamflow recovery will be slow, Concern over sustainability of N-Corpe	“We're using more water than we have." "The elephant in the room is depletions. The overappropriated feel of the basin." "The State owes the citizens of this basin an idea of how far past fully appropriated we already are." "Our water tables are going to decline until we pump less. It's that simple." "The elephant in the room is overconsumption. No one wants to think about that because we all want what we want, but your standards change if you don't have the water." "You can cut pumping, shut down end guns, conversion to dryland, crop rotations, and allocations; water tables and streamflow won't go back up for a long time." "For the Republican Basin, there's no way to treat the surface water users fairly, because there's no way to make the river flow again." "I'm not sure we can get to where everyone's happy because we can't get back to where we were." " The problem I see is getting adequate streamflow in the river." "We're always going to have a 0 [in water supply] at the beginning of any basin, and there's no way to get water out there." "What is plan 'B' when N-CORPE doesn't work anymore?" "Is the pumping [from N-CORPE] sustainable? How do we meet sustainability without reducing the groundwater table?" "That's my concern with the whole thing [N-CORPE]. If these plans or programs don't work down the line, what's the next plan for what's going to happen?"
4. Regulatory measures have been inconsistent through time, and by water use	Surface water and groundwater and regulated separately because the legislature was slow to recognize they are connected. The scope of what this plan can accomplish may be limited by the varied regulatory authorities of DNR, NRD, and other agencies.	"Another issue that probably needs to be brought forth is the first legislation in 1940 to identify that surface water and groundwater are hydrologically connected. It didn't pass, but it continued. Someplace in there, we need to recognize that there is a connection that needs to balance." "There's nothing that stacks groundwater and surface water rights together. They exist as they are now. There's no relationship between them. Now we're way past where that decision could have been made." "Anything we do, it has to be recognized that it takes the other step that the NRDs and the Department need to be able to do it through regulation." "We can't be too specific because of all the different NRDs, Irrigation Districts, etc., who are actually managing the water."
5. Compact compliance and accounting—always a challenge	Stakeholders want more clarity on Compact accounting and compliance.	"I am thankful that the state is going to continue to comply and has complied." "If we use off-site storage for recharge, what does that do for accounting?. . .If we hold 1000 acre-feet in a reservoir, does that count against Nebraska?" "Is groundwater pumping [from N-CORPE] captured by the dams or the Gulf of Mexico?" "If it were up to me, I'd give Kansas the money and keep the water." "Is the State complying? Or are the NDRs complying? It's a State compact, but we're paying for it personally through the NRDs. . . . It seems to me we should sue the state because we're keeping you in compliance."

“Challenges” Discusssion/Activity for June 21 Stakeholder Meeting

General Topic	Summary	Quotes
6. Someone else will fix our problem (east), if we don’t fix it ourselves.	Major decisions for the Basin have come from Lincoln/Omaha area, and there is a general lack of awareness from these areas about our situation and what we are already doing.	"There's a growing concern in the east that the NRD system is the fox watching the chicken house." "A lot of the problem in the Republican is perception. We weren't getting anything done, and yet no one was asking us what we're doing. The Kansas lawsuit drug on, and we couldn't do anything while that was going on. I always felt this plan was a lack of understanding from the east about what we were doing." "We are guinea pigs. Lincoln is watching us." "We've gotten more efficient and reduced our pumping. So we're not just paying $10 an acre toward solving problems [what folks in the east say]. I've paid thousands for new, more efficient irrigation systems, end gun practices, etc." "The state looks at us as trouble, but we're one of the only places with meters, the only ones with certain other measures."
7. Lack of certainty for agricultural planning	The lack of a reliable water supply makes it difficult to plan and may to lead to mistrust issues.	"A lot of the issues have to deal with lack of trust. Uncertainty in the basin has led to lack of trust. Developing certainty in the basin will go a long way to developing trust." "In 2007 it happened and [surface water users] got compensated. In 2013 and 2014, [compensation] didn't happen. Surface water users never know whether we are going to get water or not. We have no way to plan. Groundwater guys have certainty. How do you plan if you don't have certainty?" "There's a lot of things to consider besides amounts of water. Reliability is one."
8. Loss of economic returns on investments in irrigated agriculture	Many economic impacts due to water issues, getting funding for projects is difficult.	"We need to support schools, roads, etc." "We're growing crops that aren't economically viable in order to stay within compliance and allocations." "We've gotten more efficient and reduced our pumping. So we're not just paying $10 an acre toward solving problems [what folks in the east say]. I've paid thousands for new, more efficient irrigation systems, end gun practices, etc." "The surface water users have paid for those projects to use that water. The Projects were first for flood control, second for irrigation. But the irrigators paid for those." "Seed corn companies won't plant their seed in Lower Republican . . . . Right across the county line you can plant it." "Getting funding is always an issue. In the 108 process, NRDs had to fund the study because the law was enacted without funding. I believe the state has fallen behind in what we can do."

ATTACHMENT C

Republican River Basin-Wide Challenges

★ =People who agreed with a comment already posted

● =Denotes individual stakeholder highest agreement ● =Denotes individual stakeholder highest disagreement

1. Inequitable distribution of compact compliance burden	●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●	●
a. Allocations should be across the whole basin ★★★★★	●●●	●●●●●●
b. What is a good metric for fairness and balance of different uses ★★	●	
c. State Plan for recharge to aquifer	●●	
d. Allocations based on model area		
e. Excess water in the Platte needs to be transferred to the Republican ★★★	●●●●●●●●●●	
f. Allocations by sub-basin based on recharge	●	
g. Should have a plan to avoid 2 year compliance test		
h. Consider importing water from the east end of	●	●
i. When there's excess water in the Platte and we need water here, why is the burden on wells and surface water ★★	●●	
j. Impossible to have open dialogue when litigation is constantly occurring. What is amount of money being spent on legal fees? ★	●●●	●●●

2. Limited understanding of Water Supply & Use		
a. Our farming practices have changed dramatically - effects on stream flow		
b. What do we work towards? (How short are we?) ★★		
c. What is a good metric? ★		
d. Need to address areas of depletions ★		
e. Needs to be based on entire Basin not just DNR 10-50 policy ★★		
f. How much flow is needed at the head gates to sustain your system? Solution has to be based on science rather than politics ★★		

3. Over consumption of water has not been adequately addressed		
a. Are we fully or over appropriated (Use scientific approach) ★★★★★		
b. Response times vary widely for actions we may propose. Think short, mid & long term ★		
c. Deal with depletions –no additional depletions on starting point ★★		
d. We are using more water than we have		
e. Is the amount pumped from N-Corpe an indication of how far we over developed ★		
f. Remove non-beneficial vegetation ★		
g. Find ways to reduce evaporation		
h. Over consumption is based off compliance, how do we know what the "right" streamflow was? Was it right when the compact was signed?		
i. No way to make the river flow again		

4. Regulatory measures have been inconsistent through time and water use		
a. State law has created conflict between GW & SW		
b. If Regulation; Can trade $ for water		
c. Regulations don't work without consequences		

5. Compact compliance and accounting always a challenge		
a. Must comply		
b. Can we build a reserve?		

6. Someone else will fix our problem (east) if we don't fix it ourselves		
a. Lincoln is watching us		
b. This is a basin problem, there needs to be some		
c. We've gotten more efficient and reduced our pumping. So we're not just paying $10/acre. I've paid $1000 to be more efficient		

7. Lack of certainty for agricultural planning		
a. Certainty of knowing surface water receives an		
b. Reliability for planning and community viability		
c. How many surface H2O acres have underground well? Did original federal permits guarantee a certain supply of H2O		

8. Loss of economic returns on investments in irrigated agriculture		
a. Effects on economy as a whole		
b. This is a likely reality if based on false or absent		
c. H2O = life		

ATTACHMENT D

Stakeholder thoughts and concerns about the plan.

Each stakeholder was asked to share with the group what they think is the most important thing for the plan to address or other thoughts or concerns about the planning process. Their comments are paraphrased here. Each comment below represents a different stakeholder's input.

- Surface water needs more water in the system. Getting water near the end by KS.
- Need to address groundwater declines and streamflow depletions. Quit over pumping.
- More comprehensive importation of excess flow from the Platte River to help solve depletion problems in the western end of the Republican Basin.
- Address Compact compliance and equitable water use and fair supply for everyone from the top down.
- Compact Compliance is law of the land – dealing with depletions and uncertainty. Creating certainty will help build trust. Need to have a metric to see if you are heading in the right direction.
- Stop making it worse – stop depletions. Increase water availability. Emphasize flows from North Platte and South Platte.
- Compact compliance is number one and has to happen. Need to do something so the east doesn't tell us what to do, which will affect our livelihood. We are being more efficient. Platte diversion is on the right path.
- It's our duty to allowing community vitality for future generations. We are missing out on water flowing down the Platte. We need to start the process to capture excess water from the Platte now; we can't get water when it's depleted. Ask when the cup is full.
- High priority—aquifer recharge. We need more recharge projects to move water out of canals and into the aquifer during high flows. Surface water irrigators need certainty about allocations. We need to consider what we base on the model and settlement.
- Want to clarify that the 10/50 line is in the rules in response to statute; it is not statute and may not agree with the legislative intent of LB1098.
- Frustrated about the process (of today's challenges activity). The Compact and economics have very few comments despite being spelled out in the statute. Did not appreciate the negative wording of the topics.
- Compact compliance and economics are most important. Don't focus on the smaller items.
- Preserve water to keep communities viable for the future.
- Make efficient use of water—like a bank account. These topics (from the challenges activity) miss the topics the group is mandated to solve by LB1098.

- We need to find a way to share the pain equally.
- Diverse group represents the diversity of the basin, with different needs and wants Groundwater is the key and is fininte; we need to stop depleting groundwater. Consumption is faster than recharge. We need to consider the most beneficial use.
- Legislators: the basin isn't working; fix it. There are in-basin solutions; we haven't talked about options. There need to be hard choices. N-CORPE is fine for Compact compliance, but doesn't do anything for areas with depletion problems. Subbasin-based regulations. Denial of the issues needs to change.
- This is a whole-state issue; taking water from the Platte affects Lincoln and Omaha because the water transferred could havebeen used for Municipal uses downstream in the Platte. Might need to address this again. There needs to be statewide incentives. The biggest challenge is the small picture – taking from the Platte – burden needs to be carried by the state.
- The Compact is a consumptive-use compact. We manage it as a delivery compact. We still need to address overusing water and importing. It's better to use the water we have (we can't pump our way out of all the problems). We still need to address digging a deeper hole; we need to use every drop; need to stop overconsumption. NRD increased pumping by 5%.
- We need long term solutions. We cannot continue to deplete our water supply. Platte River flows are a short-term solution. We need to think long term.
- Limited understanding of the problem. Centralized location of the data. Where to find data on augmentation pumping or stream flow?
- We need to put aside what we all think and focus on the charge the legislators gave us. As a large property tax user we need think about what no water would look like. This group—focus at the high level; the NRDs—focus on the low level details.
- The biggest challenges are how to deal with being fully or overappropriated and with aquifer depletion, and how to appropriate fairly across the basin.
- More cooperation between Kansas and Nebraska (storing water at Harlan). We have to believe the science. The system is dynamic and we don't completely understand it. This group is about big solutions and I am all for local control of the details (NRDs).
- Planning and looking at broader sections. If we don't make the plan someone else will make it. Challenge and an opportunity – how do we address equitably the surface and groundwater issues in the basin?
- Two issues – figuring out how to stabilize the aquifer and increase streamflow. A lot of the ideas on the board fit within these two main goals. Stabilizing the aquifer will be easier than increasing streamflow. Get rid of worthless vegetation. Ultimately go to watershed Management.
- Understand that everyone has skin in the game and lacks certainty. Groundwater users don't actually know our supply, either. A 12 inch allocation is not enough for a 20 inch crop requirement. We have an expectation not a supply. Equity and sustainability will be tough. The plan is a road map. Consider recommending a semi-annual meeting in

McCook to raise issues and propose solutions. Consider the effects of western water (Colorado) on South Platte flows downstream; the South Platte will look different in the next 20 years. Look at J2 (gets smaller and smaller when you implement it on other people's property). Do we want to corporate or not? No one is comfortable with the process.

- Thankful for open dialog; a lot more progress today. Things are going in the right direction.