

**2011 NEBRASKA REPORT**  
for the  
Republican River Compact Administration  
October 16, 2012

The State of Nebraska is in compliance with the Republican River Compact. Using current accounting procedures, Nebraska has had positive balances during 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 which has led to compliance with the five year average. Based on preliminary estimates, Nebraska will again be in compliance for the five-year period ending in 2012.

That said, 2012 saw drought conditions once again creep into the basin. Such conditions will obviously place stress on the basins water supplies. However, any concerns that may have carried over from the basins last drought about Nebraska's ability to comply with the Compact should not exist. Nebraska has taken significant steps to bolster its water management including the development of third generation integrated management plans which contain forecasting provisions and accompanying controls that ensure Nebraska will be able to take sufficient actions in a timely manner.

These forecasting procedures are a significant advancement over what was available to Nebraska during the previous drought. These procedures incorporate detailed analyses and triggers that rely on conservative dry-year projections to proactively identify the potential for non-compliance, thereby providing the necessary information to proactively reduce consumption to levels necessary to ensure Compact compliance. These triggers go well beyond the requirements imposed by the Compact and Final Settlement Stipulation (FSS) because Nebraska knows that future non-compliance is not an option.

Nebraska also understands that it must continue to manage long-term groundwater depletions and has made consistent efforts to achieve this result. Aside from the forecasting provisions, the most recent integrated management plans also contain provisions to continue to reduce groundwater pumping volumes and conduct evaluations annually to determine if additional long-term pumping adjustments are necessary.

The basin NRDs continue to demonstrate an on-going commitment to compliance through the adoption of their rules to support the full implementation of their most recent integrated management plans. All of the integrated management plans adopted by the basin NRDs contain controls that would require, when necessary, the shutdown of wells in rapid response areas during Compact Call years as part of compliance efforts as well as provisions to administer streamflows in a manner that will ensure Nebraska maintains compliance.

The Department and Tri-Basin NRD also finalized their integrated management plan which became effective on July 1, 2012. While not a necessary component to ensure Compact compliance, this plan will among other objectives, require the NRD to limit groundwater depletions to the same volume as groundwater imports.

Nebraska continues to invest in long-term solutions to reduce consumptive use in the basin. State and local NRD financial resources continue to be invested in CREP and AWEP programs. These programs have worked to provide permanent and temporary reductions in irrigated lands throughout the basin.

Nebraska also continues to invest in the science necessary to support future sound

management decisions. The Department has been pursuing efforts in coordination with the Nebraska Republican River Management Districts Association to develop modeling tools to support the evaluation of potential conjunctive management options throughout the basin. The Department looks forward to the opportunity to work with the other states through the WaterSMART Basin Studies program to utilize these tools, and believes that such collaboration to evaluate system improvements and operational improvements are critical as recognized in section IV.E. of the Final Settlement Stipulation.

In closing, I reiterate that Nebraska will continue to comply with the Republican River Compact. The State will continue to proactively evaluate the conditions within the basin and make the necessary adjustments to remain in compliance. We will continue to work with all stakeholders in the basin, including the other states, the NRDs, the Bureau of Reclamation, and water users as we look to enhance our management efforts into the future.

## **REPORT OF WATER ADMINISTRATION ACTIVITIES FOR THE REPUBLICAN RIVER BASIN IN NEBRASKA FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2011**

January 19, 2011

Letters were sent to all non-federal irrigators reminding them that the 2010 Water Use Reports must be filed with the Cambridge Field Office or they would be closed to irrigation in 2011.

February 28, 2011

Seventeen (17) closing notices were issued to irrigators that failed to submit their required annual Water Use Reports. These water users were not allowed to divert water during the 2011 calendar year.

February 28, 2011

Thirty-eight (38) opening notices were issued to storage permits that had previously been closed.

February 28, 2011

Eleven (11) opening notices were issued to irrigators that were closed due to failing to return a 2009 Water Use Report.

May 17, 2011

Nine hundred thirty-seven (937) regulating notices were sent to irrigators in the Republican River Basin notifying them of the amount of water they could legally divert.

June 1, 2011

One (1) notice (pumping schedule) was sent to an irrigator notifying them of the amount they could legally divert.

June 28, 2011

Three (3) regulating notices were sent to water users above Meeker-Driftwood Canal notifying them that they were not allowed to divert water in excess of the amount of their appropriation without prior consent.

June 28, 2011

Twenty-Four (24) closing notices were issued to water users above Meeker-Driftwood Canal notifying them to not divert water until further notice.

July 20, 2011

Nine (9) closing notices were issued to water users above Meeker-Driftwood Canal notifying them to not divert water until further notice.

August 4, 2011

Thirty-three (33) opening notices were issued to water users above Meeker-Driftwood Canal notifying them that they were now allowed to divert water within their permitted amounts.

August 4, 2011

One (1) regulating notice was sent to an irrigator notifying them of the amount they could legally divert.

September 12, 2011

Twenty-two (22) closing notices were sent to storage permit holders in the Republican Basin.

December 1, 2011

Water Use Reports were mailed to all non-federal irrigation permits in the Republican River Basin.