

MINUTES OF THE REPUBLICAN BASIN IMP ANNUAL PROGRESS MEETING
Wednesday, October 12, 2017 – 11:00 a.m.
Tri-Basin Natural Resources District

CALL TO ORDER

The annual meeting concerning the Republican River IMP Annual Progress for Tri-Basin Natural Resources District was called to order by John Thorburn, General Manager, at 11:05 a.m.

ROLL CALL

NeDNR Staff: Jesse Bradley, Carol Flaute, Kari Burgert, and Brian Harmon

TBNRD Staff: John Thorburn, and Tammy Fahrenbruch

BUSINESS

The public was given the opportunity to bring other specific business or non-agenda items before the group for comment and/or discussion. There was no public comment.

1. Introductions
2. Review Agenda & Meeting Purpose
 - a. **Agenda Review:** There were no changes made to the agenda.
 - b. **Meeting Purpose:** The purpose of the meeting is to review integrated management planning activities, to exchange and review reports, and to consider any actions that may be necessary.
3. Old Business—Remaining Questions from Last Year
 - i. John asked to follow up on off-flow diversions for both the Platte and Republican.
 - o Kari discussed new outputs from COHYST 28 model, with a 2009-2016 climate cycle, and 5,000 AF every 5 years, that 50-55% of water from Elwood Reservoir ended up in the Platte. In the long term, nearly 70% of the water would reach the Platte
 - o John noted the 5,000 AF every 5 years was a conservative value, and that the new tool allowed for inputting calculated values
 - ii. John asked whether Central Public Power and Irrigation District (CNPPID) has any responsibility in their water permits and incidental recharge permits to ensure the mound accretion was available for the RRCA credit.
 - o Carol discussed that according to the conditions in their permits, (CNPPID) has no inherent responsibility or condition to make sure mound water is available for the RRCA credit
4. Monitoring & Management Actions
 - a. **NeDNR Report** – (Carol Flaute)
 - i. **Permitted Activities:** No new surface water permits, dam safety permits, or groundwater transfers
 - ii. **Evaporation:** Evaporation from small reservoirs was estimated at 140 AF/year.
 - iii. **Streamgage Data:** Data provided, with preliminary data in grey-filled boxes. John indicated that it is not necessary for NeDNR to list tabular streamgage data in NeDNR’s annual report after this year, now that these data are available for download from NeDNR’s website.
 - iv. **Streamflow Depletions Assessment:** 3-year average still shows a small accretion, so based on the current analysis, TBNRD will not need to pump its

augmentation well in 2017 to comply with the IMP. John indicated that TBNRD will probably operate the well a little to maintain the equipment, and that they will track that operation. In addition to the analyses in the annual report, NeDNR provided a handout summarizing an additional, future-looking analysis. Two models, projecting extrapolations based on two assessments, were shown. The 3-year model of 2011-2013 hydrologic conditions extrapolated out 7 times showed a net-depletion trend with time to about 4,000 AF/year. The 7-year model of 2010-2016 conditions extrapolated out 3 times showed a net-accretion trend of about 2,000 AF/year.

1. Jesse pointed out the true scenario is likely between these values, and that predictions into the near future contain less uncertainty than long-term predictions.
2. Jesse proposed, and participants discussed, how to proceed in future years when NeDNR's analysis (as described in the IMP) indicates that TBNRD is not in a hydrologically balanced condition. It was discussed and agreed-upon by NeDNR and TBNRD that NeDNR will provide a preliminary assessment in August or September, that the parties will set an objective each year for offsets of up to 1000 af (if needed, based on the volume of the 3-year average net depletion indicated by the preliminary analysis), and that TBNRD could then begin augmentation pumping the same year if needed. John was amenable to the proposed methodology.

v. **TBNRD Report** – (John Thorburn)

1. Certified acres in TBNRD increased due to corrections made with the county assessor data and spot checks of fields.
2. Tammy explained that some fields in Harlan County are pumped from within TBNRD but applied to fields outside of TBNRD.
3. John explained that transfer impacts are estimated using the NeDNR hydrologic depletion percentage map rather than running the model for each transfer.
4. No new groundwater transfers were permitted by the NRD in 2016. Four certified irrigated acre transfers, with a combined total of 26.19 acres were approved in 2016. John stated that groundwater transfers include pumping for a neighbor's use, and that several hundred such transfers have been permitted district-wide over the past fifteen years.
5. Ten replacement wells were permitted. Discussion included type of registration. Wells can be registered as new wells (transfer to previously unirrigated land) or conditional replacement (drilled with previous well still existing to supplement pumping on same property). Other common permit types include municipal, of which Holdrege is the largest, industrial, or de-watering (e.g. TBNRD augmentation well).
6. John mentioned significant interest within the TBNRD board of directors for developing a water-banking program, wherein farmers could opt in or opt for an allocation. Water-banking could become a district-wide, or even basin-wide system.

- b. **Information and Education** – John mentioned several opportunities for collaboration, with the potential for NeDNR to staff an event or provide educational materials, including:

- i. The South-Central Water Conference (January 29th, 2018)
 - ii. Nitrogen Management Classes (January-March, 2018)
 - iii. County Fairs within Tri-Basin
 - iv. Gateway Farm Expo (November, 2017)
 - v. Arbor Day
 - vi. Water Jamboree
 - vii. Rainwater Conservation Day
5. **Republican River Basin-Wide Activities** – There was no discussion.
6. **Other IMP Topics** – There was no discussion.
7. **Public Comment Period** – There was no public comment.
8. **Meeting Summary**
 - a. **Action Items**
 - i. NeDNR will send all meeting-related materials electronically that were not included on the DVD copy given to TBNRD.
 - b. **Schedule Next Annual Meeting** – The next meeting is set, tentatively, for September 18, 2017 at 10:30 a.m. at Tri-Basin NRD.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no more business, the meeting was closed at 12:40 p.m.