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# UPPER PLATTE RIVER BASIN-WIDE PLAN ANNUAL MEETING

WESTERN NEBRASKA COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
371 S. COLLEGE DRIVE, SIDNEY, NE, 69162  
JULY 17, 2019, @ 10:00 A.M. (MT)  
MINUTES

The following people were in attendance:

|                          |                       |                          |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Cory Steinke, CNPPID     | Thad Kuntz, ARI       | Rod Horn, SPNRD          |
| Dustin Wilke, NARD       | John Berge, NPNRD     | Jessie Winter, NeDNR     |
| Larry Rutt, SPNRD        | Kent Miller, TPNRD    | Beth Eckles, NeDNR       |
| Randy Zach, NPPD         | Bill Halligan, SPNRD  | Jesse Mintken, CPNRD     |
| Isabella Peterson, NeDNR | Melissa Mosier, NeDNR | Lyndon Vogt, CPNRD       |
| Jeff Shafer, NPPD        | Ryan Reisdorff, SPNRD | John Thorburn, TBNRD     |
| LaDene Rutt              | Jared Derry           | Shelly Sutherland, SPNRD |
| Larry Reynolds, TBNRD    | Kevin Derry           |                          |
| Travis Glanz, SPNRD      | Michelle Koch, NGPC   |                          |

- 1) Introductions
  - Introductions were given around the room.
- 2) Review Agenda & Meeting Procedures
  - There were no modifications to the agenda. Rod Horn, chair, noted the Open Meetings Act was posted in the room and stated that notice for the meeting was published to the NeDNR website.
- 3) Monitoring & Management Actions
  - a) NeDNR Report: Jessie Winter
    - i) Jessie discussed the permit section of NeDNR's 2018 report. She noted that NeDNR issued four new surface water permits (one temporary road construction permit and three temporary groundwater recharge permits), one dam safety permit (expansion of a reservoir – not a new use), and one groundwater permit (municipal transfer for the City of Gering). She also noted that 19 surface water permits expired in 2018.
      1. Jessie noted that NeDNR and all NRDs have worked to complete the Robust Review this year and the full report has been published on NeDNR's website.

b) NRD Reports

i) CPNRD: Jesse Mintken

1. They had 1,029,213 irrigated acres certified in 2018. Of those acres, 937,674 were acres of groundwater, 14,359 were acres of surface water, and 77,180 were commingled acres.
2. In 2018, CPNRD approved 129 transfers which involved newly irrigated lands of 1,067 acres. The total number of certified acres used to offset the new uses was 840. Each transfer resulted in no new net increase to stream depletions when using the CIR calculator. They had 78 well permits issued. They had one perpetual conservation easement (in Dawson County), which resulted in 16.5 acres. By the end of 2018, their water bank had a balance of 2,726 acre-feet of water rights available for offset in the overappropriated area of groundwater retirements.
3. They did not take excess flows in 2018, but they did have 1,487 acre-feet calculated to come back from the excess flows that were taken from 2011-2017.

ii) NPNRD: John Berge

1. They had no new acres certified, no new transfers, and no variances for 2018. They approved eight well construction permits.
2. The preliminary amount of groundwater withdrawn for irrigation purposes in the overappropriated area is 103,391 acre-feet in an area of 167,966 certified irrigated acres, which is an average withdrawal of 7.4 acre-inches per acre (does not include flowmeters that were down and still need to be manually calculated). They permanently retired 209 acres of groundwater certified land.
3. They extended their EPIC program to buy back allocations from landowners. They purchased 10,240 acre-inches of groundwater and gained consumptive use credit. In 2018, 1,147 acres were enrolled in the program. No water banking activities were conducted in 2018.
4. He noted under municipal and industrial accounting for 2018, Bayard, Oshkosh, and Bridgeport Ethanol's uses are higher than their baselines and they will be working with them on mitigation.
5. In 2018, they extended their telemetry program by 458 units, they spent money on irrigation improvements through various programs, and they extended their weather station network.

iii) SPNRD: Ryan Reisdorff

1. In 2018, SPNRD completed 10 transfers; two were industrial, two were producers moving acres around on their own ground, one was an allocation transfer from one field to another, and five were moving

around irrigated acres to make a new pivot work (none led to new consumptive use). Five well construction permits were approved; two were for replacement wells and three new well permits were issued (one for irrigation well/replacement and two were for industrial). They had one variance issued.

2. They have 27 non-baseline certifications (no prior history of industrial use); 12 of which currently have offsets from irrigation wells. They have 19 active industries, which pumped approximately 660 million gallons in 2018. They track and account for 10 municipalities, which pumped roughly 906 million gallons in 2018.
3. They had 132,042 irrigated acres certified in 2018, which pumped 78,227 acre-feet of water, which is about 7.3 inches per acre.
4. This was the twelfth year for allocations in the Lodgepole Creek and the tenth year for allocations in the South Platte valley. They had no new de-certifications or retirements in 2018.

iv) TBNRD: John Thorburn

1. In 2018, they had 298,511 certified irrigated acres (down from 2017 about 80 acres due to conversion of irrigated acres to livestock use). They had 20 irrigated acres transferred in 2018, all of which were one to one transfers. They issued 11 well permits, nine of which were true replacements of existing irrigation wells and two were supplemental permits.
2. For water banking activities, they launched a new program called the Water Conservation Incentive Program. For the Platte Basin portion of the District, there were no applicants enrolled in the program in 2018.
3. They have a new option, as of 2018, to divert excess flows via irrigation canals through the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture & USFWS. The water sustainability fund provided a grant to construct pipelines from the Central canal system to five federally owned wetlands (Victor Lakes, Cottonwood, Linder, Johnson, and Funk WPA). They diverted nearly 2,000 acre-feet into Funk WPA in 2018.
4. Out of the total certified irrigated acres in the Platte Basin portion of the District, about 170,000 acres are involved in the Phase II and Phase III area. Of this area in 2018, 82,000 acres reported using either no till or some form of conservation tillage practices. That equates to about 110,000 irrigated acres using some form of conservation tillage in the Platte Basin portion of the District.

v) TPNRD: Kent Miller

1. In 2018, they approved nine transfers, which included 284.27 acres. There were no additional acres temporarily placed in the TPNRD water

bank account. They issued seven replacement well permits and three new well permits.

2. There were no changes in industrial or commercial accounting in 2018.
3. The NCORPE project pumped no water to the Platte in 2018 (pumping not required in first increment). He noted they will be required and will begin pumping water next year. He noted NCORPE has paid taxes from the beginning of the project and NCORPE is looking into the possibility of producing renewable energy including solar.
4. He noted TPNRD has begun a new data collection program for the second increment IMP and will have more to report on this at the 2020 Annual Meeting.

c) Data, Information, Studies

i) Selection of Technical Committee Chair

1. Brandi Flyr was nominated as the Technical Committee Chair by Lyndon Vogt and was seconded by Jessie Winter. All members were in favor and Brandi will continue to be the Technical Committee Chair.

ii) Progress Toward Increment Goals (measuring the success of the IMPs)

1. Upper Platte Basin-Wide Plan Stakeholder Survey

- Melissa Mosier, NeDNR, presented the results from the Upper Platte Basin-Wide Plan Stakeholder Survey conducted by the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center. She noted the Survey is posted on the Department's website. 18 out of 45 participants responded (40% response rate). Participants were generally satisfied with the overall process, participants were able to learn about other stakeholders' perspectives, and participants were pleased with the facilitator. Participants would like to see the technical analyses sooner and would like more transparency throughout the process. The results will be used to improve and plan for the future.

2. Overview of technical analyses completed in 2018 & 2019

- Jessie Winter, NeDNR, discussed the annual tracking of accretions and depletions report. NeDNR analyzed the following transfer permits: 129 for CPNRD, zero for NPNRD, two for SPNRD, four for TBNRD, and nine for TPNRD. Overall, there was a small impact from uses by 2029, of positive 12 acre-feet impact to the stream from changes in location of consumptive use.
- Jessie discussed studies completed including the INSIGHT analysis, the Phase II Soil & Water Conservation Study, the

Total Depletions Report, and the Robust Review Analysis. She noted the studies and results are available at: <http://upjointplanning.nebraska.gov/>

- 4) Second Increment Basin-Wide Planning
  - Melissa Mosier, NeDNR, noted the five Basin-Wide Plan hearings being held this week. After the hearings, testimony will be considered, the NRD boards will approve the final draft of the Plan, NeDNR and the NRDs will come to agreement on the Plan, the Plan will be made available to the public on August 12<sup>th</sup>, notices of order will be issued, and the second increment Plan will go into effect on September 11<sup>th</sup>.
- 5) Review of Revisions to the Basin-Wide Plan or to Individual IMPs
  - There were no revisions to the BWP or to individual IMPs.
- 6) Written Requests for Revisions to the Basin-Wide Plan or to Individual IMPs or Disputes
  - There were no written requests for revisions to the BWP, individual IMPs, or disputes.
- 7) Public Comment Period
  - There were no public comments.
- 8) Meeting Summary
  - a) Action Items
    - There were no action items.
  - b) Schedule Next Annual Meeting
    - The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 15, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. CT at TBNRD's office in Holdrege, NE.