

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

DATE: December 31, 2017

TO: Governance Committee (GC) of the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (PRRIP)

FROM: Gordon W. "Jeff" Fassett, State of Nebraska's Representative to the GC Director, Nebraska Department of Natural Resources

SUBJECT: Nebraska Update on Continued Implementation of the Nebraska New Depletion Plan (NNDP)

Nebraska continues to meet the terms of the Nebraska New Depletions Plan (NNDP). Based upon the estimates shown in last year's update on depletive activities and mitigation measures and this year's annual report on permitted activities in 2016, the amount of accretions due to mitigation measures exceeds the amount of depletions from new or expanded uses. This memo contains a general description of Nebraska's ongoing work to utilize comprehensive tools to continue updating its assessment of all post-July 1, 1997, water related activities. If there are questions on the contents of this document please contact Jennifer Schellpeper at 402-471-2899 or jennifer.schellpeper@nebraska.gov.

Nebraska is currently in the process of conducting a robust review of all water related activities and changes since July 1, 1997. The robust review will assess impacts to streamflow from land use changes since 1997, including the addition, retirement, and transfer of groundwater irrigated acres; any permitted new uses and associated mitigation measures; groundwater allocations (in the North Platte and South Platte Natural Resources Districts); excess flow diversions for groundwater recharge via canals; and streamflow augmentation projects. Also included will be impacts due to changes in municipal and industrial water uses.

The guidance document that outlines the general process for the robust review of all water use activities and mitigation measures is available at: <https://dnr.nebraska.gov/sites/dnr.nebraska.gov/files/doc/water-planning/upper-platte/other/basin-wide-technical-committee-guidance20120814.pdf>. The outcome of the analyses will be used to refine Nebraska's assessment of the combined effects of depletive activities and mitigation measures. This approach will utilize modeling tools that have been redeveloped through the course of the first increment. The robust review will utilize the updated Western Water Use Management model and COHYST2010 model (Version 28). These modeling tools will be used to assess the combined effects of depletion activities and mitigation measures in a manner consistent with the requirements outlined in the NNDP.

Work on this robust review began in early 2017. Nebraska is currently working to finalize the integrated datasets that incorporate all of the compiled data on new or expanded uses and mitigation measures since July 1, 1997. Nebraska's work plan anticipates completion of the analyses in 2018. The robust review will help generate new targets for the updated basin-wide plan for the Upper Platte River Basin and the individual Upper Platte natural resources districts' integrated management plans (IMPs) that will be adopted in late 2019.

Nebraska has begun working on revisions to the Upper Platte Basin-Wide Plan for the second 10-year planning increment. Since the basin-wide planning process began in June 2016, a representative stakeholder group has met nine times and discussed background information on modeling and management actions within the basin, progress made in the first 10-year planning increment, and potential revisions to the current goals and objectives of the plan. The current timeline for the basin-wide plan development and stakeholder process anticipates that a draft version the plan will be prepared for consideration by the stakeholder group in mid-2018 and the final plan will be completed in 2019. Each of the Upper Platte Basin natural resources districts' IMPs will also be updated to conform to the updated basin-wide plan. The process of updating the IMPs will begin in 2018. The second 10-year planning increment basin-wide plan and IMPs will contain the necessary goals and objectives to ensure that Nebraska continues its compliance with and implementation of the NNDP.