

Potential Solution to the Republican River

By
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I offer this proposal in an attempt to minimize the potential conflicts and damages the basin and state may be subject to with other actions and lack of actions. I will make several basic assumptions in this proposal with the largest being that the reader has some knowledge of the history and conditions in the basin.

My proposal is simplistic in nature and I believe if it can be kept from too many complications it may offer hope to all.

PROPOSAL

1. All basin wells have a base allocation of 6 acre-inches per acre. This will allow all wells to be treated equally and should put the basin in compliance with the Republican River compact.
2. Anyone wanting additional water will be charged a rate (recommended \$4/acre inch) for additional water. This rate would be similar to rates charged on projects for surface water. If an additional acre-inch of water will does not have more value than expense it will not be used. The fee will encourage conservation. It is anticipated the ability to buy additional water will provide drought tolerance and allow for best management practices. NRD's must pay for any funds not collected due to water banking policies or bad debt.
3. The revenue generated from the sale of water will be used to fund acreage retirement, augmentation, damages to surface irrigators and conservation. Although it is recognized the greatest income potential is in the west it is also in the west where the most work needs to be done to off set depletions.
4. The Natural Resource Districts should have a program to convert surface irrigated acres to wells. This would maintain local tax bases and increase management potentials through NRD programs and policies.
5. The Department of Natural Resources should encourage and assist in the transfer of acres from service by irrigation canal to service from the river.
6. Irrigation Districts, Bureau of Reclamation, Department of Natural Resources and Natural Resource Districts should jointly develop a program to transfer acres and their assessments from Irrigation District acres to Natural Resource Districts. The NRD would pay the Irrigation District the assessments annually for the acres transferred to them. This "banking" would allow individuals wanting out of Irrigation Districts to remove their acres without increasing costs to those who remain. This program would serve as an augmentation program to allow the NRD to utilize the water that would have been delivered to those acres to off set over use at a minimal cost. As more acres are retired and transferred to the NRD's it
7. The base allocation and additional water rate may change annually once compact compliance is attained and surface water users remaining have an adequate water supply.

Respectfully,
Mike Delka