



Dave Heineman
Governor

STATE OF NEBRASKA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Ann Bl
Acting Dire.

June 26, 2007

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IN REPLY

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Bureau of Reclamation
Nebraska-Kansas Area Office
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Subject: Follow-Up from June 22, 2007 Meeting in Holdrege
Republican River Basin Planning Group

Dear NRD Managers:

This is a follow up from our meeting on June 22, 2007. I think we made progress albeit in "baby steps." I remain optimistic that we can put together a viable plan. As we discussed there are some difficult choices ahead for all of us and there is limited time for action prior to the August meeting of the Republican River Compact Administration (RRCA). Our challenge is to produce a plan that will allow us to tell the Governor and legislature that our calculated consumptive uses on average will be less than our allocations by 2012.

At our meeting, several individuals and groups agreed to work on a number of projects to achieve compact compliance. I noted these as follows:

1. Senator Carlson exhorted everyone to figure out how much water they have to have, not how much water they want;

2. The Republican River Basin Coalition and the Republican Basin Irrigation District will collaborate on a plan to purchase the use of surface water;
3. Mike Clements will investigate how much money it would take to permanently retire irrigated acres in the Quick Response area, either as an extension to an existing CREP or EQIP contract or as a new contract. DNR will develop data to determine how much water would return to the river and when as a result of the buy-out.
4. John Thorburn will develop a firm estimate of how much consumptive use by phreatophytes can be reduced with vegetation management;
5. The DNR will investigate how much consumptive use can be reduced and how much stream flow can be increased by putting low level outlet works in small dams.
6. Augmentation projects are also on the list, but we probably won't have a firm plan that we can provide to Kansas by August 2007.

My staff will be available to work with you. Please contact Tina Kurtz with questions regarding the IMPs (tkurtz@dnr.ne.gov, or (402) 471-1697). For more technical items, direct questions to Jim Williams (jwilliams@dnr.ne.gov, or (402) 471-1026). Our next meeting will be July 31 at 10:00 a.m. at the Tri-Basin NRD.

Sincerely,



Ann Bleed
Director

Attachments:

Cc: Justin Lavene, Assistant Attorney General
Senator Tom Carlson
Senator Mark Christensen
Meeting Attendees