

Frenchman Valley Appraisal Study - Plan of Study Meeting McCook Field Office June 7, 2005 – 10:00			
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Bureau of Reclamation			
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Nebraska Department of Natural Resources			
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Frenchman Valley & H & RW Irrigation Districts			
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Frenchman Valley Appraisal Study - Plan of Study - Meeting Notes – June 7, 2005

Listed numbers correspond to June 7, 2005 meeting agenda items.

1), 2), 3), 4) Went through introductions, review of agenda, review of interests from May 4th meeting, and review of the purpose of the study from Nebraska Department of Natural Resources initial request.

5) Study Area – general consensus was that the study area would include the entire Frenchman Creek drainage area and continue to the end of the Frenchman Unit, which is just east of McCook.

6) Review of study goals and objectives

Reviewed the interests identified in the May 4, 2004 meeting. It seemed that all of the interests would fit in objectives 4, 5, and/or 6. Some of the interest would fit more than one of these objectives.

4. Evaluate alternative choices for optimizing existing facilities related to Enders Reservoir and the irrigated area it serves
5. Evaluate alternative choices for providing lake level benefits from Enders Reservoir
6. Evaluate alternative choices for providing recharge benefits through use of Ender Reservoir

ACTION ITEM - Jack, Jill, and Steve will review the list of interests identified and place each interest into 1 or more of the 3 main identified objectives.

One of the interests identified by a number of the attendees was who would pay for the benefits. It was discussed that hopefully the study will identify alternatives that provide benefits for all of the parties.

7) Planning Process – Jack Wergin mentioned that the funding for the Appraisal Study begins in fiscal year 2006, which begins October 1, 2005. Normally appraisal studies take approximately 18-24 months. By streamlining and utilizing the previous studies and reports, the Plan of Study (POS) could outline a 12-month timeline. Jill Manring mentioned that normally these types of planning studies take longer and cost more than estimated. A draft POS for the Lower Republican Basin Appraisal Study was distributed to the group.

8) BASELINE – there was some discussion about the baseline alternative or the future without alternative. The study will need to estimate this future without condition, which would be the best estimate of what will happen in the Frenchman Creek area if nothing is done. There was a discussion that the future without should extend out to 40 years. This future without will be the alternative that all of the other alternatives are compared to, specifically to determine if there is a federal interest to proceed to a Feasibility Study. This alternative should be added to the three objectives listed above. Don Felker, representing the Irrigation Districts, mentioned that the District's input will be valuable in helping develop the future without condition.

9) Assumptions and Constraints – The POS will list the assumptions and constraints, i.e. the assumptions made for the future without condition, the Republican River Compact, the

Republican River Lawsuit Settlement, the NRD Integrated Management Plans, specific sections of Nebraska water law, etc.

- 10) The group was asked to look for any existing reports or studies that can be listed in a reference section of the POS. At this point all studies do not need to be copied, group members can request copies of the studies on the list.

ACTION ITEM – Jack and Jill will begin to draft the list of existing studies and reports and email it to the group. Group members should send any additions to Jack and/or Jill and the list will continually be updated and provided to group members. Don Felker will bring information regarding the South Divide Canal to McCook for reviewing and listing. This information will be made available to the other Group members upon request. Mary Swanda indicated he will mention the Frenchman Valley Study at the upcoming Republican River Compact Meeting.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT – the Group discussed the need and timing for public involvement. Some of the Group thought it was important to get something out to the public to let them know that this study is planned. The Group thought that it would be better to be proactive with a public notice rather than reactive. Jill mentioned that at this point a press release could go out about the study stating that the public will have an opportunity to provide comments at a later date. Discussion of who should put out a press release, Reclamation or Nebraska DNR. Reclamation will put out the press release since the study is being conducted by Reclamation.

ACTION ITEM – Jack and Jill will work with Judy O'Sullivan (NKAO public involvement specialist) to draft a press release, with review by Steve Gaul of Nebraska DNR and Don Felker of the Irrigation Districts.

POS – a copy of the POS for the Lower Republican Appraisal Study was distributed to the Group. A POS for the Frenchman Valley Appraisal Study is targeted for completion by the end of this fiscal year (September 30, 2005). Specifics this Group will need to address include review of study tasks, identify who will be completing the tasks, and development of a timetable. The normal timeframe for an Appraisal study is approximately 18 months. The need to reduce this timeframe for the Frenchman Valley appraisal study was discussed. The Group thought that the appraisal study could be completed in a 12 month timeframe.

WATER QUALITY – There was some discussion concerning water quality. Jill mentioned she did not feel that the water quality issue will present a problem. She said that there was some water quality work completed during the contract renewal process and this work should be sufficient for the appraisal level study.

- 11) **NEXT MEETING** – The next meeting was tentatively set for July 21st at 10:00 at the McCook Field Office. Jack, Jill, and Steve Gaul will email information to the group as it is developed. If needed, a conference call could be held before the next meeting.