

Mimtes of the Fourth Meeting of the Republican River Compact

Commission at Topaka, Kansas, on January 27-28, 1941

Present:

M. C. Hinderlider, Commissioner for Colorado

George S. Knapp, Commissioner for Kansas

Wardner G. Scott, Commissioner for Nebraska

R. E. Willis, Chief, Bureau of Irrigation, Water Power and
Drainage, Dept. of Public Works, Nebraska

John Riddell, Ass't Att'y Gen'l of Nebraska

Meeting convened at 10 A. M. in the hearing room of the State Board of

Agriculture in the Capitol Building. The following gentlemen appeared before the

Commission to express their views concerning needs for water developments and water

conservation in the Republican River basin in Nebraska and Kansas.

Don P. Postlethwaite, attorney of St. Francis, Kansas, who
talked on the needs of the valley in that section of the
state;

M. O. Ryan, representing a number of organizations in the
Republican River valley in Nebraska and Kansas, who spoke
in behalf of the needs of the residents in the area repre-
sented by him;

Dr. E. P. Ahrens of Scandia, Kansas, who spoke in behalf of
needs for flood control and water for reclamation and other
benefits in the lower basin of the Republican River.

All these gentlemen expressed the hope that a compact may be consummated and rati-

fied by the Legislatures of the three states at an early date, and assured the

Commission of their full support in the efforts of the Commission to attain this

objective. They expressed the view that any conclusions reached by the Commission,
they felt confident, would be approved by the water users throught the basin.

Mr. Harry P. Burleigh and Associate Robt. M. Barkley, representing the
U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics, with offices at ^{Amerville, Nebr.} ~~Lincoln, Nebr.~~

appeared before the Commission and outlined the scope of the work which the Bureau
has been carrying on throught the Republican River basin to determine the extent
and useability of the underground waters of the basin and the availeability of lands
which could be reclaimed thereby in tributary basin areas. Mr. Burleigh advised
the Commission that it is now contemplated the complete report of the Bureau will
be available for distribution to the commissioners not later than three weeks from
date.

Mr. Burleigh explained at considerable length the nature of these investi-
gations and the basis of determinations of water supply and available land areas,
limits of pumping lift, limits of cost per acre used in his determinations and many
other factors. He also presented the Commission with a tabular statement showing
estimated amounts of underground water available in the various basins in the Re-
publican River basin in the three states and amounts of land to which such water
supplies could be applied within the economic limits he had assumed.

surface water available for use within the basin.

At the afternoon session, Engineer Ware of the U. S. Engineers Office at Kansas City appeared, at the invitation of the Commission, and discussed present progress of the studies and reports on flood control and multiple use projects in the Republican River basin. Mr. Ware advised the Commission that, in conformity with former understanding of the Commission, his department is bringing its former reports concerning the economic feasibility of the various reservoir projects which have been investigated thruout the basin, to determine if the excess benefits over costs resulting from the building of the Harlan County Reservoir, could be so distributed over other storage reservoirs thruout the basin as to make the benefits from constructing such reservoirs would exceed the estimated costs thereof. The Commission was advised, however, that, even though the results of such studies were favorable to the development of a number of storage reservoirs for flood control or ~~multiple~~^{multiple}-purpose projects, there is no certainty the department would recommend such program of developments in lieu of the single development of the Harlan County reservoir, which is designed for a major purpose.

Mr. Ware also advised the Commission that his department expects to give consideration to data furnished by the Bureau of Reclamation concerning any reser-

Mr. Burleigh advised the Commission that, in view of the fact that numerous applications had been made to his department by land owners thruout the basin, he was desirous of obtaining a statement from the Commission as to whether the amounts of underground waters he had determined would be feasibly possible of use, would, in the opinion of the Commission, exceed the allotment of water to each state which the Commission may have agreed upon; that his department did not want to recommend developments of underground water supplies in excess of the allocations of water to each state.

He advised the Commission also that his department is advising with the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation with a view of reaching an understanding concerning the scope of future developments within the basin, both of surface and underground waters, which would not be overlapping in effect, to the end that a rational program of development by both federal agencies might be carried out in the future without the danger of over-development by either agency to the detriment of developments by the other agency. Upon inquiry, Mr. Burleigh advised the Commission that all of the underground waters of the basin above Scandia, Kansas, are included in the total water supplies of the basin, as reflected in measurements of stream flow at Scandia and other points in the basin, and that any underground water developments must be considered as reducing to that extent the amount of

voirs or projects which are being investigated by the Bureau, but that such information will have to be available to the Corps before ^{Supplemental} June 1, 1941, since the report of the Corps of Engineers cannot be delayed later than that date.

JANUARY 28, 1941

Meeting of the Commission convened in the Jayhawk Hotel at 10 A. M.,

with all members present.

The Commission resumed its studies on water supply and tentative allocations, which had been temporarily suspended at the last meeting in Lincoln. This work consumed the entire day. After making some adjustments of previous figures, and reconstructing present stream flow in the light of all present available knowledge concerning past uses of water within the basin, the Commission were in substantial agreement, both as to principles and as to allocations of water to the three states.

In this connection, the Commission gave consideration to a preliminary draft for an interstate compact, which had been prepared by Commissioner Hinderlinder and presented to the Commission on January 27th. The members of the Commission were in general agreement concerning the terms of the tentative draft, but reserved any final conclusions until the tentative draft could receive further

study and approval of the Attorneys General of the three states.

The Commission adjourned its deliberations at 5 P. M., with the understanding that the Commission could convene again at Denver, Colorado, on the 15th of February.

M. B. Davidson
Commissioner for Colorado

W. A. K. Kraft
Commissioner for Kansas

W. A. K. Kraft
Commissioner for Nebraska