Occumentation-Depletions + Accretions Sea 5

REPUBLICAN RIVER COMPACT ADMINISTRATION GROUND WATER MODEL

June 30, 2003

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with the December 15, 2002 Final Settlement Stipulation in <u>Kansas v. Nebraska and Colorado</u>, No. 126 Original, the Republican River Ground Water Modeling Committee developed a comprehensive ground water model to represent the ground water flow system in the Republican River Basin. The primary purpose of the Republican River Compact Administration Ground Water Model (RRCA Model) is to determine the amount, location, and timing of streamflow depletions to the Republican River caused by well pumping and to determine streamflow accretions from recharge of water imported from the Platte River Basin into the Republican River Basin.

Representatives from the State of Colorado, State of Kansas, and State of Nebraska developed the RRCA Model, with participation from the United States Bureau of Reclamation and United States Geological Survey. The data and information used in construction and calibration of the RRCA Model were provided and shared by all three States and the United States in a collegial manner. In a similar vein, the RRCA Model was constructed and calibrated in a collaborative exercise by technical experts from all three States.

The RRCA Model is fully operational and calibrated to represent the physical and hydrogeological characteristics of the Republican River Basin to a reasonable degree. The RRCA Model matches the trend and magnitude of ground water level changes and stream baseflow targets distributed throughout the Republican River Basin, without significant bias in any region or hydrologic characteristic. The RRCA Model is calibrated to a sufficient degree that depletions from ground water pumping and accretions from imported water from the Platte River System to the Republican River may be quantified and assigned to prescribed streamflow reaches in accord with the RRCA Accounting Procedures.

INTRODUCTION

The Republican River rises in the high plains of northeastern Colorado and western Kansas and Nebraska. The river flows in a generally eastern direction and encompasses approximately 24,900 square miles within its watershed that is illustrated below. The States of Colorado, Kansas, and Nebraska, with the consent of the United States of America, entered into the Republican River Compact in 1942 in order to equitably divide the waters of the Republican River Basin. Ground water accretions and depletions are subject to administration within the Compact for the portion of the basin that contributes flow above the streamflow gaging station on the Republican River near Hardy, Nebraska which is in the eastern part of the Republican River Basin near the Kansas-Nebraska state line.

The Final Settlement Stipulation (FSS) in <u>Kansas v. Nebraska and Colorado</u>, No. 126 Original, which resolved that interstate dispute, provided for development of a comprehensive ground water model to represent the ground water flow system in the Republican River Basin. This document describes the content, construction, and calibration of the Republican River Compact Administration Ground Water Model (RRCA Model). Representatives from the State of Colorado, State of Kansas, and State of Nebraska developed the RRCA Model, with participation from the United States Bureau of Reclamation and United States Geological Survey (USGS).

Purpose and Scope

The primary purpose of the RRCA Model is to determine the amount, location, and timing of streamflow depletions to the Republican River caused by well pumping and to determine streamflow accretions from recharge of water imported from the Platte River Basin into the Republican River Basin above the streamflow gaging station near Hardy, Nebraska. The RRCA Model construction and calibration represent the physical and hydrogeological characteristics of the Republican River Basin to a reasonable degree for the period 1918 to 2000. The RRCA Model simulates historical and current physical conditions; it is not an optimization or operational model and does not assess the impact of land use and conservation practices, reservoir operations, or other water supply or water administration practices.

The RRCA Model will be used to determine ground water depletions and imported water supply accretions in formulas prescribed in the RRCA Accounting Procedures. Future input data to the RRCA Model will be developed in accordance with the requirements of the Accounting Procedures.

Document Context

This document is intended to provide a detailed description of all major facets in the RRCA Model structure, data and information, calibration, and results that were reached in its construction by the State of Colorado, State of Kansas, and State of Nebraska in consultation with the United States. Updated with annual streamflow, climatological, irrigated acreage, ground water pumping, and other information, the RRCA Model will be used to quantify said streamflow depletions caused by well pumping and imported water supply accretions for application within the formulas prescribed in the RRCA Accounting Procedures. The data and information used in construction and calibration of the RRCA Model were provided and shared by all three States and the United States in a collegial manner. In a similar vein, the RRCA Model was constructed and calibrated in a collaborative exercise by technical experts from all three States. This document reflects the RRCA Model architecture, the data sets used, and calibration agreed upon by the States as required by the FSS.

The RRCA Model, consisting of the computer code, input files, and pre-processing and post-processing programs, is provided in Appendix A on a DVD ROM. Members of the RRCA Engineering Committee are working on a RRCA Ground Water Model Users Manual that will provide details related to the use of the model in conjunction with the RRCA Accounting Procedures. The Users Manual will discuss data content and formatting, the use of pre-processing

programs, details on completing the various runs of the model, and application of the RRCA Model's outputs in the annual RRCA accounting.

Model Findings and Summary

The RRCA Model is fully operational and calibrated to represent the physical and hydrogeological characteristics of the Republican River Basin to a reasonable degree. The RRCA Model reasonably matches the trend and magnitude of ground water levels and stream baseflow targets distributed throughout the Republican River Basin, without significant bias in any region or hydrologic characteristic. The RRCA Model is calibrated to a sufficient degree that depletions from ground water pumping and accretions from imported water from the Platte River System to the Republican River may be quantified and assigned to prescribed streamflow reaches in accord with the RRCA Accounting Procedures.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF GROUND WATER FLOW SYSTEM

Background and Physical Setting

The tributaries at the headwaters of the Republican River rise on the high plains of northeastern Colorado and western Kansas and Nebraska. The mainstem of the Republican River is formed by the junction of the North Fork of the Republican River and the Arikaree River near Haigler, Nebraska. The river flows in a generally eastern direction for approximately 445 miles before it joins the Smoky Hill River to form the Kansas River at Junction City, Kansas. The Republican River Basin encompasses approximately 24,900 square miles within its watershed that is illustrated below.

In order to include all ground water resources that affect stream flows within the Republican River Basin, the RRCA Model domain was extended beyond the Republican River watershed. The model domain boundaries extend from the Platte River in the north to the Ogallala aquifer outcrops on the southern, eastern, and western boundaries. The model domain coincides with that described in USGS Open File Report 02-175 except in the eastern portion of the Basin where it was extended eastward to the eastern edge of Kearney County, Nebraska and into Adams County, Nebraska to reflect increased water table elevations caused by imported water supplies from the Platte River. The model domain encompasses approximately 30,000 square miles. A map of the model domain, including model cell designations and boundary conditions, is provided in Appendix B.

MATHEMATICAL REPRESENTATION OF GROUND WATER FLOW MODEL

Model Program

The RRCA Model applies a modified version of the United States Geological Survey modular ground water model MODFLOW 2000 (Harbaugh and others, 2000) version 1.10 to numerically calculate stream depletions from ground water pumping and accretions from imported water supplies. MODFLOW is a simulation program that uses a finite-difference method to solve the ground water flow equation.

In addition to its robust numerical solver capabilities, MODFLOW also offers two significant attributes. First, it is relatively easily understood, which promotes confidence in its application by those intending to use the computer model to simulate physical and hydrological conditions. Second, it is easily enhanced to accommodate the continuing need for additional capabilities to address a variety of physical and hydrogeological conditions.

The MODFLOW program promotes simulation accuracy and computational flexibility by segmenting various hydrologic attributes such as recharge, leakage from the aquifer to the rivers, or evapotranspiration from ground water as separate or distinct packages. For application within the RRCA Model, the following enhancement modules or packages were used:

- ♦ Basic (BAS6)
- ◆ Layer Property Flow (LPF1)
- Recharge (RCH6)
- ♦ Well (WEL6)
- ♦ Stream (STR6)
- ♦ Evapotranspiration (EVT6)
- ♦ Drains (DRN6)
- Preconditioned Conjugate Gradient (PCG2)
- ♦ Hydrograph (HYMOD1)

Model Architecture

The following items are the major components in the RRCA Model architecture:

- ? The model is a single layer bounded on the bottom by the impermeable Pierre Shale.
- ? The initial Stream Network was taken from USGS Open File Report 02-175.
- ? The interim aquifer base was taken from USGS Open File Report 02-175, and was adjusted to reflect elevation variances near streams and data available from Nebraska.
- ? Land surface elevations were obtained from the National Elevation Dataset (NED) one arc second Digital Elevation Model (DEM). The land surface elevations along stream channels were modified in order to provide strictly decreasing elevations along stream channels.
- ? The ground water flow system was simulated as if there were a constant transmissivity in order to preserve numerical stability.

(Column) Area (acres)
Area (acres)
700
700
700
700
700
700
700
700
700 1600000 Phreatophyte Area Republican River Settlement Model Version 12p 1200000 (feet) 8000000 67 73 79 85 91 55 43 37 5 25 <u>6</u> . 14200000 14800000 000009#1 0000041 (1661)

irrigated lands. The Y-axis for each curve is inches of recharge from precipitation and the X-axis depicts the total amount of precipitation each year.

Lesser calibration parameters that are used to further refine the ground water model include:

<u>Spatial Multipliers</u> – the Spatial Multiplier has a value of 1.0 throughout the model domain except in the mound area in Nebraska where the value is 1.5. A map of spatial multipliers with associated values is provided in Appendix Q.

Steady-State Multiplier – for the period of 1918 to 1940, the long-term average recharge is not fully indicative of all conditions in the model domain, primarily in the western area. A steady-state multiplier of 0.75 was applied to the average of the 1918-1940 recharge period throughout the Republican River Basin.

Phreatophyte potential evapotranspiration rate – the rate is indexed to the McCook and Red Cloud, Nebraska and Akron, Colorado climate stations. The annual potential evapotranspiration rates were linearly interpolated from west to east across the model domain. To improve the ability of the model to match baseflows, all phreatophyte evapotranspiration rates were adjusted by a factor of 2.0. For specific sub-basins, a second factor ranging between 0.03 and 1.12 was applied. The location of the phreatophyte areas and distribution of potential evapotranspiration are provided in Appendix R.

Saturated Thickness – Applied within the RRCA Model to improve the model performance, the saturated thickness in any given model cell was adjusted to a minimum of 10 feet. The saturated thickness is based upon average values for the period 1940-2000 and was kriged across the model domain between known data points. The distribution of saturated thickness is provided in Appendix S.

<u>Transmissivity</u> – The adjustments to hydraulic conductivity and saturated thickness described above were made during the calibration procedures and resulted in a distribution of transmissivity that is provided in Appendix T.

Model Output

The RRCA Model is fully operational and calibrated to represent the physical and hydrogeological characteristics of the Republican River Basin to a reasonable degree. The RRCA Model reasonably matches the trend and magnitude of ground water levels and stream baseflow targets distributed throughout the Republican River Basin, without significant bias in any region or hydrologic characteristic. The RRCA Model is calibrated to a sufficient degree that depletions from ground water pumping and accretions from imported water from the Platte River System to the Republican River are quantified and assigned to prescribed streamflow reaches that are in accord with the RRCA Accounting Procedures.

The RRCA Model calculates the amount of ground water depletions from well pumping as the difference in streamflows using two simulation runs of the model. The "base" run is the simulation with all ground water pumping, ground water pumping recharge, and surface water recharge within the model study boundary for the period 1918 to the current accounting year "on". The "no State pumping" run is the simulation run with the same model inputs as the base run with the exception that all ground water pumping and pumping recharge for that particular State is turned "off." The amount of recharge from precipitation is recalculated by converting all ground wateronly irrigated land to non-irrigated lands. The amount of depletions charged to each respective State is the difference between the "base run" and the "no State pumping run". In a similar manner, the "no NE import" run is the simulation with the same model inputs as the base run with the exception that surface water recharge from irrigation and canal leakage that is associated with Nebraska's Imported Water Supply is turned "off." The amount of recharge from precipitation is recalculated by converting all surface water-only irrigated land to non irrigated lands and the Imported Water Supply Credit is the difference in stream flows between these two model simulation runs. For commingled lands, defined as receiving irrigation water from a combination of surface and ground water supplies, there is no switch or conversion from irrigated to non-irrigated lands because it is assumed any deficit from one supply source will be replaced by the other. Therefore, while the surface or ground water return flows may be removed in a no pumping or import simulation run, the derivation of recharge from precipitation remains unchanged for commingled lands.

An output of the model is baseflows at selected stream cells. Changes in the baseflows predicted by the model between the "base" run and the "no-State-pumping" model run are considered to be the depletions to streamflows, or ground water computed beneficial consumptive use due to State ground water pumping at that location. The values for each Sub-basin include all depletions and accretions upstream of the confluence with the Main Stem. For sub-basins with reservoirs and the Main Stem, the model's output totals the depletions and accretions above and below each federal reservoir and in the reservoir reaches. The values for the Main Stem include all depletions and accretions in stream reaches not otherwise accounted for in a Sub-basin. The values for the Main Stem are computed separately for the reach above Guide Rock, and the reach below Guide Rock. For subsequent years, the RRCA Model will be extended to include new hydrologic, pumping, climate, and other annualized datasets. The data will be compiled and exchanged in accordance with the RRCA Accounting Procedures.

For illustrative purposes, impact tables that quantify the depletion of ground water well pumping and imported water supply accretions by stream reach are provided in Appendix U for the period 1981-2000.

CONCLUSIONS

The RRCA Model fulfills the requirements of the FSS to develop a ground water model for use by the RRCA to aid in the administration of the Republican River Compact. The RRCA Model quantifies the amount, location, and timing of streamflow depletions caused by ground water well

pumping and the accretions to streamflow from imported water across the model domain on an annual basis. The RRCA Model provides the required output information in an acceptable format to describe the amounts and timing of said ground water pumping depletions and imported water accretions that are necessary for application within the prescribed annual RRCA Accounting Procedures. The RRCA Model calibration represents the physical and hydrogeological characteristics of the Republican River Basin to a reasonable degree. The use of specific methods or computational procedures within the RRCA Model does not necessarily mean that any party represents or accepts them to be the best or only method for purposes other than that, which is applied in the RRCA Model. The RRCA Model will be used as is, with only annual updates to the appropriate data files and necessary modifications to pre-processor programs required to accommodate modified future data formats, but without recalibration, until such time as the RRCA approves any changes. The RRCA may consider revisions to the model as set forth in the FSS.

7205 18656 19651 19451 18477 18477 20583 24633 226391 22835 22847 22847 22847 22879 22879 22877 Total Mainstem Total Swanson Harry Strunk Harlan Enders Keith Sebelius Bonny Hugh Butler Impact of Colorado Pumping (acre-feet) South Fork Sappa Rock Red Willow Prairie Dog Medicine Guide Rock-Hardy Version 12p: Harlan-Guide Rock Swanson-Harian - 540 - 883 - 4775 - 1775 - 1639 - 1957 - 1181 - 1067 - 2716 - 2716 - 2716 - 2716 - 2716 - 2716 - 2716 - 2716 - 3330 - 3330 - 3330 - 34253 North Fork Driftwood Frenchm an Buffalo Beaver 2335 1678 1109 1109 516 245 245 245 245 245 245 245 245 245 1149 1149 1774 1744 1739 1870 1774 1739 1870 1774 1739 1870 1774

RRCA Model Impacts

Appendix U

-1761

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1289

21036 19488 17176 27176 20277 10414 10414 13302 13302 13302 22338 19984 Mainstem Total 365 332 152 152 235 235 330 458 428 428 364 428 364 364 364 365 375 375 Swanson Harry Strunk Harlan Enders Keith Sebelius 359 486 486 754 754 616 616 851 Bonny Hugh Butler Impact of Kansas Pumping (acre-feet) South Fork Sappa Rock Red Willow 4068 4086 4086 4086 4496 2498 2498 751 751 14166 6357 2639 4455 14166 6357 2543 2543 Prairie Dog Medicine 12p: Guide Rock-Hardy Version 1 Swanson-Harlan Above Swanson North Fork Frenchm an Driffwood Buffalo Beaver Arikaree

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RRCA Model Impacts

Enders Keith Sebeltus Bonny Hugh Butler Impact of Nebraska Pumping (acre-feet) South Fork Sappa Red Willow Prairie Dog Version 12p: North Fork 臣 Driffwood Buffalo Arikaree

Swanson

Harlan

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RRCA Model Impacts

Appendix U

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Version 12p: Impact of Nebraska Imports (acre-feet)	Total	15236	13783	13140	13742	16787	13154	16759	13809	13849	14815	12688	14672	24611	15954	17916	24395	16447	17694	18450	18664		000001
	Mainstem Total	8587	7045	6417	0099		5939	•				4625				L			8750				9000
	Swanson	0	0	0	0	0	ļ	0	0			0		0	0		0			0	0		
	Harry Strunk	0		0	٥	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Ö	0			-
	Harlan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		C
	Enders	0	0	0	0	ō	0	0	0	0	0 .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	O		c
	Keith Sebelius	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Ö	C	O	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		c
	Bonny	0	0	0	0	0	0	00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		c
	Hugh Butler	0	0	0	0	0	0	- 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		•
	South Fork	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Ö	ō	0	0	O	0	0	0		
	Sappa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	o	14	17	00	15	0	0	0	0		
	Rock	0	O	to	g	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	O		
	Red Willow	11	13	13	15	16	16	18	20	18	19	20	24	40	30	35	39	68	34	33	31	•	24
	Prairie Dog	0	0	0	ō	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	o		C
	Medicine	6637	6119	9029	7122	7222	7195	7438	7604	7538	7662	8038	8371	8878	8467	8770	9153	9020	8891	9482	8028		7998
	Guide Rock- Hardy	0	0	o	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	o	0	0	0	0	. 0	0		
	Harlan- Guide Rock					90			107	114		113						204	174	165	155	•	127
	Swanson- Harlan	8538	6989	6355	6532	9461	5852	9202	6077	6178	7020	4515	6175	15487	7251	8908	14968	7171	8228	8764	9413		8172
	Above Swanson	0	0	0	0	0	0	Ó	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	O	0	0		
	North Fork	Ö	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	C C	0	0	0	0	0	0	Ö	0	0	0	0		C
	Frenchm an	0	0	0	0	0	0	O.	0	0	0	0	0	Ö	0	0	o	0	0	0	0		
	Driftwood	0	0	O.	0	0 [0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0		
	Buffalo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	٥	0		<u> </u>
	Beaver	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					0			0	Ö	o	Ó	o		C
	Arikaree	0 0	o	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		-
	Year	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	Average	2000