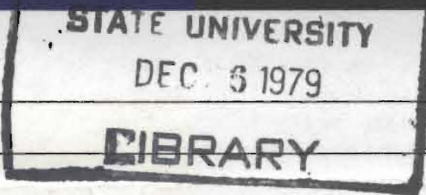


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basin bulletin



Vol. 7, No. 1

September-October 1979

MRBC approves FY 82 priorities

The Missouri River Basin Commission designated 45 programs and projects as basinwide priorities for fiscal year 1982 at the 30th quarterly meeting in Omaha Oct. 31 and Nov. 1. The commission also heard a progress report on implementation of the Carter Administration's national water policy.

Priorities

The MRBC priorities process represents an endorsement of proposed federally led or federally funded projects and programs in the Missouri River Basin. The endorsement is considered by federal agencies and the President in budgeting, and by the U.S. Congress in appropriating funds or renewing federal agency programs.

In a departure from past priority-setting activities, all 45 programs and projects endorsed were cited as "equally of highest priority" to the basin. The "1980 Priorities Report" to be published in January will list priorities alphabetically within six categories: implementation, feasibility studies, river basin planning, special studies, research, and data collection and analysis. (Complete listing, page 2.)

Among the recommendations for FY 82 was the Lower Missouri Level B Study, which had previously been submitted as a priority and budget item for FY 81. MRBC staff reported that the study had not been included in the administration's FY 81 budget because the U.S. Water Resources Council did not endorse any level B studies for FY 81.

"This study is intended to bring together water resources information which is presently scattered and form it into a water management plan for the area," said MRBC Chairman Millard W. Hall. "We feel it is important to continue to support it." Final action to resubmit the study under FY 82 priorities came on a motion by Capt. James Glasgow, Department of Transportation member and chairman of the Planning Committee.

Task force

John Cunningham, water policy coordinator for the Department of the Interior, presented advance copies of the fourth progress report of the Water Policy Implementation Task Force, and predicted "water policy implementation should be close to 90 percent completed by Dec. 31." The report cited eight accomplishments expected, including increased title III monies to states for technical and planning assistance.

Cost-sharing legislation is part of the "unfinished business" of the task force, according to Cunningham. Unified support from the states, Congress, and the President on proposed legislation is "not likely in this session," he said. Conservation was also noted as an issue for further task force work.

Other action

In other agenda action, Chairman Hall reactivated the dormant Energy and Water Committee, appointing as chairman Dr. Charles Metzger, Department of Energy secretarial representative for region VIII. Dr. Metzger noted past committee efforts in preparing and updating a "Status of Electric Power" report and suggested new directions for the committee. He said he expects the committee to study "substantive issues" involved with small scale hydroelectric development and other water/energy related concerns.



Metzger

Basinwide hydrology study begins

The MRBC basinwide hydrology study officially got underway in October with congressional appropriation of first-year funding and initial steps in developing the plan of study.

"The purpose of the study is to develop an operational, basinwide hydrologic data accounting system, and to determine historical and current streamflow depletions by appropriate water use category," according to Donald L. Ohnstad, MRBC hydrology study director. "Such a system would enable a uniform analysis of the effects of water management alternatives upon the basin's water resources," he said.

The 3-year study will cost \$2.3 million — \$1.7 million anticipated from federal sources and \$579,000 in in-kind services from basin states. The federal appropriation for fiscal 1980 is \$739,000.

Water resources personnel representing MRBC member states and federal agencies met in Denver to assist in developing the plan of study by providing input on work group activities, resources and methodologies for six aspects of the study. These included: surface and ground water supply; agricultural water use; industrial, municipal, and energy water use; instream water use; systems, methods, and operation; and irrigated lands identification.

"The management group wanted a better understanding of concerns throughout the basin before drafting the plan of study," Ohnstad said. "We are now incorporating recommendations from the workshop sessions into the draft plan of study."

The draft plan of study will be circulated for review and comment to Commission members and to those who attended the workshop meetings.

MRBC FY 1982 Regional Priorities

Implementation

Apple Creek Unit, North Dakota;
Buffalo Bill Dam and Reservoir Enlargement, Wyoming;
Gregory County Pumped Storage Unit, South Dakota;
Missouri River Bank Stabilization — Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska;
Missouri River, National Recreation River Management Plan Implementation, Nebraska, South Dakota;
Narrows Unit, Colorado;
Rural Clean Water Program;
Rural Water Supply Systems;
Toston Dam Hydroelectric Facility, Montana;
Westerly Creek Flood Control Project, Colorado.

Feasibility studies

Colorado/Big Thompson Hydroelectric Study;
Cache La Poudre River Basin Feasibility Study, Colorado;
Glen Elder Unit Study, Kansas;
Pumped Storage Hydroelectric Facilities Investigation — Missouri River Main Stem;
Southwest North Dakota Water Supply Study;
Water Supply Pipeline Project Studies, South Dakota;
Westside Irrigation Project Study, Wyoming.

Special studies

Central Midwest Aquifer Study, Kansas;
Irrigation Water Conservation Study, Montana;
Phase II Ground-Water Supply Studies, South Dakota;
Wintertime Weather Modification Studies.

River Basin planning

Title III Federal Assistance for State Water Planning (Extension and acceleration of title III funding was ascribed special significance by the Priorities Committee, and is considered the region's most urgent priority.);
Colorado State Water Plan, Phase III;
Cooperative River Basin Study, South Platte and Republican River Basins, Colorado;
James River Basin Water Management Study;
Kansas River Basin Level B Study;
Lower Missouri Subbasin Level B Study — Missouri, Kansas, Iowa;
Resource Conservation and Development Program.

Research

Instream Flow Requirements;
Saline Water Problems with Supplemental Irrigation, Missouri;
Second Stage Ground-Water Investigations, North Dakota;
South Platte Basin Water Management Model, Colorado;
Water Use Efficiency and Conservation.

Data collection analysis

Archaeological Inventory and Appraisal;
Color Infrared Photographic Coverage;
Flood Insurance Studies;
Ground-Water Data;
Snow Surveys;
Soil Surveys;
Stream Gaging — Quality;
Stream Gaging — Quantity;
Topographic Mapping;
Water-Use Data.

Chairman testifies on synfuels impact

MRBC Chairman Millard W. Hall testified in mid-November before a congressional subcommittee of the Joint Committee on Economics investigating the impact of coal-based synfuel development on water resources in the Northern Great Plains states. Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, and South Dakota are all included in the region under study.

Sen. George McGovern, D-S.D., called the hearing to review demands which an accelerated coal-based synfuel development program would exert on water resources of the Northern Great Plains states. The Subcommittee on Economic Growth and Stabilization held the hearing as a fact-finding, research, and analysis function on behalf of the joint committee.

"The central issue is, would an accelerated coal-based synfuel development program create potential conflicts with nonenergy uses of water in the Northern Great Plains?" according to a letter from Senator McGovern to Chairman Hall.

The subcommittee is particularly interested in research that has been done to date by federal and state governments in examining the availability of water for coal-based synfuel development in the Northern Great Plains. Chairman Hall reviewed results of three major studies of water availability and synfuel development in the region: the Northern Great Plains Resources Program, (1971); the MRBC-led Yellowstone River Basin and Adjacent Coal Area Level B Study (1978); and the MRBC-led Upper Missouri River Basin Water Availability Assessment for Coal Technology Requirements (1979).

"I am particularly interested in providing testimony on this topic on behalf of the Missouri River Basin Commission," Chairman Hall said. "The recent reactivation of the MRBC Energy and Water Committee and the selection of water and energy as the theme for our upcoming fifth annual basin governors' conference are further evidence of commission interest in energy development and related impacts on our water supply."

Among other witnesses who appeared at the hearing were Guy R. Martin, assistant secretary for land and water resources, Department of the Interior; Ruth Clusen, assistant secretary for environment, Department of Energy; and Prof. Wilson Clark, Eastern Montana College, member of the Montana Board of Natural Resources and Conservation.

Copies of Chairman Hall's testimony may be obtained by writing Information Specialist, Missouri River Basin Commission, Suite 403, 10050 Regency Circle, Omaha, Neb. 68114.

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September-October 1979

The Missouri River Basin Commission is a state-federal body charged with coordination, planning and communication for water and related land resources in the ten-state region drained by the Missouri River, in accordance with Public Law 89-80. Ten states, ten federal agencies, and two interstate water compacts are represented on the commission. They are Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming; the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Army, Commerce, Energy, HEW, HUD, Interior and Transportation, and the Environmental Protection and Federal Emergency Management Agencies; and Big Blue River Compact Administration and Yellowstone River Compact Commission. Canada is an observer.

Dr. Millard W. Hall, chairman; Vern Fahy, North Dakota, vice chairman

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Navigation season extended

The commercial navigation season on the Missouri River may be 10 days longer than normal this year if the weather does not curtail U.S. Army Corps of Engineers plans.

Col. C. A. Selleck Jr., head of the Corps' Missouri River Division, announced projected closing dates of the extended 1979 season as Dec. 2 at Sioux City, Dec. 4 at Omaha, Dec. 5 at Nebraska City, Dec. 7 at Kansas City and Dec. 11 at the river's mouth. The normal closing date at the mouth is Dec. 1.

"If there is a serious threat of channel freezing, however, it might be necessary to curtail releases prior to these dates with very little advance notice," Colonel Selleck warned.

The corps predicts water supply in the Missouri main stem reservoirs will continue to be good for support of navigation through the remainder of the extended season. Although dry conditions have prevailed in the basin since May, current conditions have reversed the situation and assure flows from the main stem system that range from 5,000 to 10,000 cubic feet per second above those required for full service to navigation, the corps reported.

MRBC publishes coal planning aids

MRBC has published a 4-volume reference system designed to aid state, local and regional planners in analyzing various social, economic and environmental impacts associated with coal mining and energy development in the basin. The system was developed under phase I of the Western Coal Planning Assistance Project (WCPAP), conducted by MRBC under contract with the U.S. Geological Survey/Resource and Land Investigation (RALI) Program.

"Each book addresses a separate reference need, and together they provide a complementary and comprehensive resource system," said Gerald R. Zimmerman, MRBC director of special studies and WCPAP coordinator.

The documents:

"Fact Book for Western Coal/Energy Development," includes a range of coal-related facts: existing coal fields and mines, coal-related facilities, transportation, legislation, and primary and secondary impacts.

"Guide to Methods for Impact Assessment of Western Coal/Energy Development," surveys existing methodologies for predicting environmental, social and fiscal impacts and presents a definitive method for estimating population changes caused by increased employment. Practical application is emphasized.

"Forecasts for Western Coal/Energy Development," explains and compares coal/energy forecasts and forecast methodologies in detail, stressing usefulness to State and local planners.

"Source Book for Western Coal/Energy Development," lists specific sources for information, technical assistance and funding related to coal/energy problems concerning facilities, transportation, legislation, and primary and secondary impacts.

Two other reports have also been prepared as part of this report. The "Phase I Final Report" provides a user's guide to the reference system along with an assessment of high-priority problems in the Missouri River Basin's "coal states" — Montana, Wyoming, and North Dakota. The "Workshop Report" summarizes presentations made at three WCPAP needs assessment workshops held in November 1978.

Copies of these publications are now being distributed to planning offices throughout the basin. A limited number of copies are also available upon request from MRBC.



Water policy '90 percent implemented by year's end'

John Cunningham, water policy coordinator for the Department of the Interior's Water Policy Implementation Task Force, told MRBC members the work of implementing President Carter's water policy initiatives is nearly completed. The task force was established in 1978 to address several policy questions and create acceptable means for federal agencies to implement new policies. Cunningham told commission members at the 30th quarterly meeting that 90 percent of the original task force assignment has been addressed, with legislation or procedures expected to be established and accepted by the end of the year.

MRBC to meet in Denver, Kansas City, Bismarck

Dates and locations have been selected for the next three meetings of the Missouri River Basin Commission.

The commission will meet Feb. 6-7 at the Denver Marina Hotel; May 5-7 at the Holiday Inn Towers, Kansas City, Kans.; and July 9-10 at the Kirkwood Motor Inn, Bismarck, N.D.

The Denver meeting will be the commission's 31st regular quarterly meeting.

The May meeting in Kansas City, Kans., will include a joint session with the Arkansas-White-Red Basins Interagency Committee (AWRBIAC). Regional planning will be the theme for the meeting.

The July meeting will be in conjunction with the 5th Annual Missouri River Basin Governors' Conference, hosted by Gov. Arthur Link of North Dakota. Water and energy will be among topics discussed in that coal-producing state.

DOI solicitor affirms administration stance

Private interests requiring water for mineral development on Western public lands cannot expect the federal government to assert its water rights on their behalf, according to Department of the Interior Solicitor Leo M. Krulitz.

Krulitz told those attending the annual convention of the Wyoming Water Development Association in October that such developers "would have to acquire any necessary water through state systems and under applicable state law. It has been and continues to be the policy of the Carter Administration that the states must be allowed to allocate their water resources in their own way," Krulitz said.

"President Carter's statement in Albuquerque earlier this month on state management of water resources left no room for doubt about how this administration feels on the question," said Krulitz. "The President pointed out that Western states' systems for allocating and managing water resources have evolved over decades, recognizing the high value and relative scarcity of the resource, and must be protected."

Krulitz said another example of this administration's support for state water systems is the Interior Department's position on coal slurry pipelines. He said he recently testified before the House Interior Committee on a bill to authorize federal certification of such lines. In that testimony he supported a number of provisions aimed specifically at ensuring that state water laws will not be circumvented. In addition, he urged the committee to adopt another provision to further toughen the language.

Three commissioners named

Three federal agencies have named new representatives to the Missouri River Basin Commission.

Dr. Charles F. Metzger, region VIII secretarial representative, Denver, will serve for the Department of Energy (DOE). Metzger assumed his regional post with DOE in May, and was previously a state official for natural resources in North Dakota.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has named Francis X. Tobin as its first representative to MRBC. Tobin is regional director for region VII based in Kansas City, Mo.

Roland (R. J.) Bruning, Department of the Interior field representative, Denver, succeeds Robert S. Sanchez Jr. as interior's MRBC commissioner. Prior to his appointment to the Denver post in August, Bruning served as special assistant for minerals to interior's assistant secretary for energy and minerals.

DOI readies Wyoming dam report

Secretary of the Interior Cecil D. Andrus has approved and adopted as his proposed report a Bureau of Reclamation feasibility report on modification of Wyoming's Buffalo Bill Dam. The modification would nearly quadruple the dam's power generation capability and is a key feature of reclamation's Shoshone Project.

The proposed feasibility report has been forwarded to involved states and interested federal agencies for review, with comments to be returned by the end of November.

Proposed modifications include raising the dam 25 feet to enlarge storage space in the reservoir and replacing the powerplant. The existing powerplant is a 5.6-megawatt plant built in 1922. A new, 20-megawatt plant would produce nearly 60 million kilowatt-hours of electric generation annually.

Also included in proposed modifications are construction of a visitor center at the top of the dam and construction of subimpoundments to alleviate dust pollution problems and create fish and wildlife habitat at the upper end of the reservoir.

Directory, proceedings available

Two publications, the 1979 coordination directory and governors' conference proceedings, are now available from MRBC.

The "Coordination Directory of State and Federal Water and Land Resources Officials" is a telephone and address listing of over 500 state and federal agency personnel involved in the broad spectrum of water planning activities within the Missouri River Basin. It is intended as an aid to interagency communication for Federal, State, interstate, local, and nongovernmental interests concerned with development, management, and conservation of water and related land resources.

"Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Missouri River Basin Governors's Conference" records discussion of issues and resulting actions emanating from the MRBC-sponsored conference of governors of the 10 basin states. The proceedings include complete texts of remarks by Daniel P. Beard, deputy assistant secretary for land and water resources, U.S. Department of the Interior; and Douglas M. Costel, administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Also included is a conference perspective by MRBC Chairman Millard W. Hall. The fourth annual governors' conference was held April 30 and May 1, 1979, in Kansas City, Mo.

Basin notes

Francine Neubauer has been appointed executive director of the Kansas Water Resources Board. She had previously been a staff member there for 14 years... J. William McDonald is now director of the Colorado Water Conservation Board, succeeding Felix Sparks, who retired earlier this year... The U.S. Water Resources Council has created a full-time staff position to serve as liaison with the six river basin commissions. Adele Mitchell joined the WRC staff in September and attended the MRBC 30th quarterly session in Omaha... Don Wylder Minnich, an official of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, has been nominated to be regional director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's western regional headquarters in Denver... The Western Irrigation Forum has announced a conference on the theme "Irrigation, Energy, and Conservation: What do the 80's hold?" It will be held in the basin at the Denver Marriott Hotel Jan. 30-Feb. 1... The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation has a new name. It is now the Water and Power Resources Service (WPRS).

Four join MRBC staff

Four employees have joined the MRBC staff:

- Robert Horner, hydrologist, will work on the hydrology study under study director Donald L. Ohnstad.
- Elaine Larkin, information specialist, will edit MRBC publications and assist staff in public affairs programs.
- Linda Morris, word processor, is a native of Iowa and a graduate of Carson-Macedonia High School.
- Carl Teinert, water resources planner, will be primarily responsible for researching and incorporating water quality concerns into the MRBC comprehensive planning process.



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