

mrbc



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MRBC adopts plan for Upper Mo.

The Missouri River Basin Commission has adopted the plan and preliminary draft environmental impact statement recommended for the Upper Missouri River Basin in the final report of the Upper Missouri River Basin Level B Study. The action came at the 33rd quarterly meeting in Bismarck, N.D., in July.

The level B study, started in 1978, developed a thorough understanding of the problems and needs as well as potentials and opportunities of the region. The study area includes most of Montana and the extreme western portion of North Dakota. (See map, page two.)

MRBC Chairman Millard W. Hall said the plan is "a comprehensive approach for managing resources and draws on the information compiled during the study."

Among principal recommendations, the plan calls for investigation of additional hydropower development at new or existing facilities in Montana, recommends preservation measures to protect scenic and natural areas in the region, and identifies several sites for additional irrigation development.

The adopted plan to be published in August will become final after official 90-day review by basin governors and by heads of

federal agencies concerned with water and related resources planning. Their comments will be included in the final document. In addition, a draft environmental impact statement is being circulated for review with comments to be incorporated into a final environmental impact statement.

The Upper Missouri plan will become part of the Missouri River Basin Water Resources Management Plan.

In other action at the meeting, the commission came one step closer to seating an official observer representing the region's Indian tribes. Mr. Ray High Eagle of the United Sioux Tribes of South Dakota was seated in an unofficial capacity at the meeting table. Other tribal representatives at the meeting included Bill Youpee, Montana Intertribal Policy Board; Lawrin Baker, Affiliated Tribes of North Dakota; and Robert Burian, Yankton Sioux Tribe.

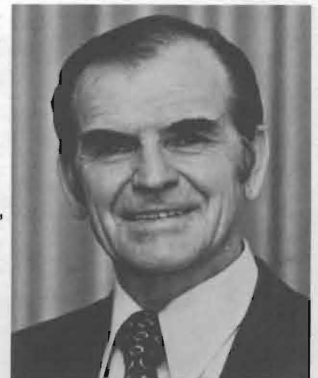
R. J. Bruning, Department of the Interior member, has worked with basin Indian tribes to expedite selection of an official observer. Bruning said the tribes of the basin will meet before the next commission meeting to designate a representative to serve as the official observer and determine formal arrangements for tribal participation in commission activities.

Governors postpone conference

North Dakota Gov. Arthur A. Link voiced strong support for future Missouri River Basin governors' conferences and said he was personally disappointed that this year's conference had been postponed. Speaking at the 33rd quarterly commission meeting in Bismarck, N.D., Gov. Link urged state commissioners to take this message back to their governors:

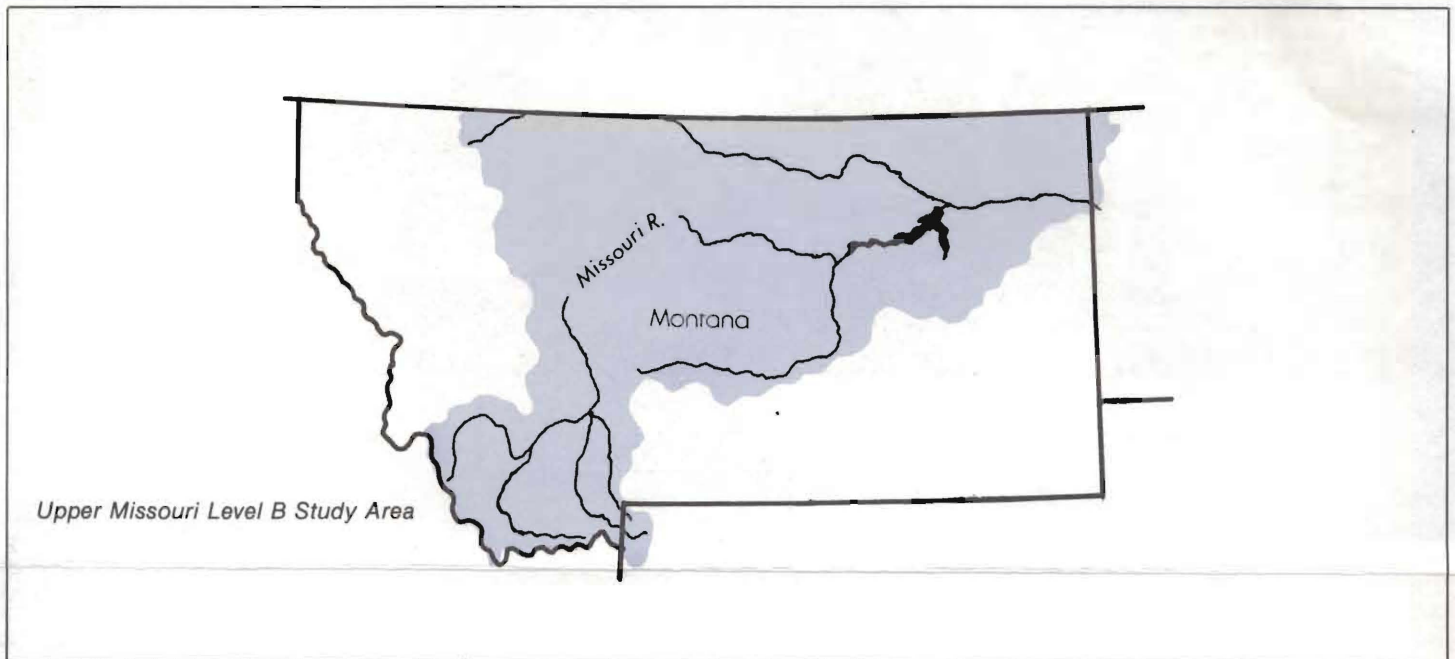
"... a meeting of the governors as part of the commission's program has injected a new aspect, and I think a very beneficial aspect, in deliberations and decisions that this very important and prestigious commission is charged with considering. Certainly, I do not consider the postponement of the governors' meeting at this time an indication that it should not or

North Dakota Gov.
Arthur A. Link



will not continue. I will continue to give it strong support."

Governor Link said the postponement resulted when "with hardly any exception, serious unavoidable conflicts in the governors' schedules suggested that it was best that it be postponed."



Time is short for RBC authorization

Congress has very little time remaining in this session in which to authorize and appropriate FY '81 funds for state water planning grants, river basin commissions and the U.S. Water Resources Council, all created by the Water Resources Planning Act of 1965.

Congress has set Oct. 4 as the target date for adjournment. Congressional Quarterly estimated June 28 that the House had 43 working days left after it recessed July 2. There were 45 working days remaining in the Senate, 52 if the Senate chose to work Saturdays, CQ reported.

Officially, federal funding for the council, river basin commissions and state planning grants will end Sept. 30 unless Congress acts. Operation after that will depend on whatever carryover funds may be available. Since river basin commissions receive both state and federal funding, they may be able to continue operating for a time at a much reduced level of activity.

A bill to amend the Water Resources Planning Act of 1965 and to authorize the functions of the act for fiscal years 1981 and 1982 — S. 1639 — has been reported favorably by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. The bill was introduced by Sen. Mike Gravel, D-Alaska.

S. 1639 authorized \$5.3 million for the Council, \$4.2 million for assessments and regional or river basin planning of which the Missouri River Basin Commission will receive a portion; \$3.4 million for river basin commission operating programs; and up to \$30 million for planning grants to the states.

In addition to authorizing appropriations, S. 1639 also:

- Creates an independent chairman of the U.S. Water Resources Council;
- Limits voting membership on the council to the departments and agencies with major federal water programs;
- Creates a state advisory committee for the council;
- Specifically authorizes an independent technical review of water projects by the council; and
- Makes river basin commission chairmen (currently presidential appointees) subject to appointment by the chairman of the council.

Authorizing legislation has been introduced in the House by Reps. Bruce Vento, D-Minn., and Morris Udall, D-Ariz. The Vento bill (H.R. 2071) is before the Subcommittee on Water and Power Resources of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee. The Udall bill (H.R. 2610) was reported out by the Committees on Public Works, Interior and Agriculture a year ago.

"The Resource," newsletter of the National Governors Association, reports that the fate of Water Resources Planning Act amendments in the House "appears tied to the omnibus water projects bill (H.R. 4788)."

"Key House members have indicated that they will not move any (Water Resources Council) legislation unless it is part of a package that includes the omnibus bill, which has already passed the House but has not yet been reported out in the Senate," the NGA newsletter reported.

—by Wm. C. Ramige
Director of Administration and Public Affairs

MRBC States prod Congress for title III, RBC action

The 10 Missouri River basin Commission member states have taken several steps urging Congress to move now in reauthorizing the law that provides for river basin commissions, state water planning grants, and the U.S. Water Resources Council.

Meeting in caucus prior to the 33rd quarterly Commission meeting in Bismarck, state members unanimously decided to send a resolution to congressional subcommittees concerned with water and to basin congressional delegates. The resolution asks Congress to act immediately in authorizing Public Law 89-80, the Water Resources Act of 1965, and to appropriate funds authorized by that act.

"We are especially concerned that planning funds for state water management efforts are in jeopardy not because of any efforts to balance the federal budget, but because these funds are being held hostage in a dispute between Congress and the Administration over unrelated water issues," MRBC Vice-Chairman Warren R. Neufeld said.

"Because of this dispute, several years of groundwork in regional cooperation through the river basin commissions, as well as state planning efforts that are just getting a healthy start, could be sacrificed in the controversy," he said.

Neufeld said states want Congress to act now to preserve the Water Resources Act of 1965, P.L. 89-80, and title III provisions for state planning grants, along with river basin commission authorization. The resolution also pledges that states will work with Congress in fiscal year 1981 to "amend and improve" P.L. 89-80.

Some states have taken additional steps to support swift congressional action. Kansas Governor John Carlin has written to the Kansas delegation urging their support for immediate authorization and funding. Other members are pursuing similar action at the statehouse level.

The 10 Missouri River Basin states received just under \$2 million in title III planning grants in fiscal year 1980. These funds are matched equally by state funds devoted to water planning and management.

Title II of the act provided more than \$1.5 million for comprehensive regional planning and special studies conducted by the Missouri River Basin Commission throughout the 10 states in fiscal year 1980.

Reauthorization must come prior to the end of the fiscal year Sept. 30 to insure that studies now in progress can continue, and to maintain continuity in state water planning efforts funded through title III.

WRC grants to basin states noted

The U.S. Water Resources Council has awarded \$9.63 million to states for fiscal year 1980 water resources planning. Of that total, just over \$1.9 million was awarded to states in the Missouri River Basin.

WRC officials noted that while the total monies awarded represented a three-fold increase over 1979 awards, the total of state requests exceeded \$26 million. The grants, authorized through title III of the Water Resources Planning Act of 1965, are matched on a 50/50 basis by state recipients.

Title III Monies to Missouri River Basin States FY 1979-80

	FY '79	FY '80
Colorado	\$ 62,680	\$ 223,000
Iowa	\$ 51,180	\$ 154,600
Kansas	\$ 56,330	\$ 187,400
Minnesota	\$ 59,860	\$ 222,500
Missouri	\$ 63,760	\$ 212,000
Montana	\$ 67,450	\$ 227,600
Nebraska	\$ 58,380	\$ 207,800
North Dakota	\$ 51,560	\$ 174,200
South Dakota	\$ 47,550	\$ 171,000
Wyoming	\$ 55,340	\$ 136,500
Total	\$574,090	\$1,916,000

Source: U.S. Water Resources Council



Fahy recognized for service

Missouri River Basin Commission Chairman Millard W. Hall presents Vern Fahy, North Dakota, with a plaque recognizing his contribution as commission vice chairman for the past year. Fahy was succeeded at the 33rd quarterly meeting by Warren R. Neufeld, South Dakota member. George Christopoulos, Wyoming member, was named vice chairman-elect. The vice chairman's role is rotated annually among state members.

Eisel resigns as WRC director

Water Resources Council Director Leo Eisel has resigned effective Aug. 8. Eisel, who had served as director since August 1977, cited personal and family reasons associated with the recent death of his father.

Before joining the council, Eisel was director of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, and prior to that, director of the Illinois Division of Water Resources.

Deputy Director Gerald Seinwill will serve as acting director. Seinwill has served as deputy since February 1978.

RBC's seek priorities unity

The six regional river basin commissions, involving 32 states throughout the country, are cooperating in efforts to send a consistent message of regional water management priorities to Congress and to federal agencies. The effort is being led by the Missouri River Basin Commission, and has already resulted in some scheduling changes for the MRBC priorities process.

The six commissions are seeking consistency on several points: (1) a common format for compiling priority proposals from commission members; (2) a common schedule for designating priorities and submitting those designations to Congress and appropriate federal agencies; and (3) a common format for submitting priorities to federal and congressional decisionmakers.

Chairman Millard W. Hall said MRBC took the leadership role in the effort because "we want to see that the message we are creating through the priorities process is successfully heard by Congress and by federal officials."

"We feel that our message has gotten lost in the past, with each of the six commissions submitting a different format at different times," he said. "We are hopeful that one voice in 'six-part harmony' will help accomplish what six 'solos' have not."

Format and timing have been a problem in the past for states involved in more than one commission. Some states are members of two or three commissions, and state officials have sometimes been perplexed by the variety of priorities forms required and data requested by different commissions.

MRBC priorities evolve from state water planning agencies' review of federal programs and projects which are elements in the Missouri River Basin Water Resources Management Plan. Missouri River Basin states will designate fiscal year 1983 priorities by submitting their selections to the MRBC Priorities Committee between July 15 and Oct. 15. In the past, the MRBC schedule permitted priorities submissions from May 15 through July 15.

Comments now heard on regional plan, EIS

Comments have started coming in on the first biennial update of the Missouri River Basin Commission regional plan adopted for official 90-day review at the 32nd commission meeting in May.

The "Missouri River Basin Water Resources Management Plan" includes approximately 500 projects, ongoing management programs, and practices which support a variety of objectives in water management in the region. Basin governors, and heads of federal agencies concerned with water and related resources planning were sent review copies of the report in June. Comments received from them will be appended to the document when it is published in final form in September.

"This is a plan with many elements and objectives — rather than one single objective," MRBC Chairman Millard W. Hall said when the plan was adopted.

"What we are trying to do here is to coordinate and bring into a common focus the many objectives of the varied activities being undertaken or planned by the 10 states and the federal agencies with water management responsibility in the basin," he said.

The regional plan includes an environmental impact statement for the first time. The statement is an attempt to provide a regional overview of the environmental effects of the many plan elements.

Official comments on the draft environmental impact statement will be used in preparing a final environmental impact statement to accompany the plan.



North Dakota Gov. Arthur A. Link speaks informally with MRBC Chairman Millard W. Hall and others who attended a box luncheon for the commission hosted by the North Dakota Water Users Association prior to the 33rd quarterly meeting. The luncheon included a tour of McDowell Dam and Recreation Area near Bismarck, N.D.

Trail planned for latter day explorers

Monday, June 3, 1805—

They crossed the river and fixed camp at the point formed by the junction of this river and the Missouri. It now became an interesting question which of these two streams was the Missouri. On their right decision much of the fate of the expedition depended. The characteristics of the north fork so much resembled those of the Missouri that almost all of the party believed that to be the true course to be pursued. The captains, however, were inclined to think otherwise because the north branch did not give the color and characteristics of the Missouri. All their findings were far from deciding the important question of their future route. They therefore determined that each captain was to ascend one of the rivers during a day-and-a-half's march or further if necessary for their satisfaction. The fatigue of the past few days had occasioned some falling off in the appearance of the men, not having been able to wear moccasins, their feet were much bruised and mangled in passing over the rocks and rough ground. They were, however, perfectly cheerful and had an undiminished ardor for the expedition . . .

The Lewis and Clark Journal
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1976
Bicentennial Edition

When the 26 members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition came to a fork in their "road" in 1805 — and there were no road signs saying "this way to the Pacific Ocean" — they were faced with several days and several miles of "trial and error" portaging or paddling. Now, a century-and-a-half later, would-be explorers who want to paddle in their wake will have a distinct advantage.

The National Park Service of the Department of the Interior has just begun the process of establishing the "Lewis and Clark Trail," a recreational and historic re-creation of the route traveled by that first expedition.

The National Trails Act (P.L. 95-675) designated the 1804-1806 route of the Lewis and Clark expedition a National Historic Trail in 1978. The law establishes the trail on federal lands.

The park service is now developing a management plan that will determine how and where the trail will be developed and assign responsibility for development and upkeep to federal agencies with jurisdiction over the lands selected. The management plan will also identify sites and trail segments on non-federal lands with potential for inclusion.

Field efforts to identify and document the historic route of Lewis and Clark and determine the significant historic sites associated with the expedition are now under way. Efforts to inventory and identify the recreational resources along the route got under way this summer.

The act recognizes that it may not be possible to establish a continuous trail over the entire historic route of the expedition. However, alternative routing is provided for where it is not possible to follow the expedition route exactly. Federal land acquisition is limited to donation or exchange of lands presently within established federal areas.

The trail will not be completed and open to the public for several years.

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

MRBC Basin Bulletin is published bimonthly and circulated to 4,500 subscribers. Address changes may be sent to the Missouri River Basin Commission, Suite 403, 10050 Regency Circle, Omaha, Neb. 68114. Telephone: (402) 397-5714. Elaine Larkin, editor; Lois Thomas, graphic artist; Mike Larkin, cartographer.

FY '82 budget 'holds the line'

A mood of austerity at all levels of government dominated discussion of the MRBC fiscal year 1982 operating budget at the 32nd quarterly meeting in Kansas City, Kans. in May. Budget action reflected that mood as the commission rejected a proposal to increase state contributions by 7 percent over the 1981 level.

State members, acting in caucus prior to the meeting, were reluctant to pledge any increase in state shares in the face of state agency budget cuts throughout the basin. Chairman Hall asked the commission to follow the recommendation of the State Caucus.

The resulting action held the operating budget to \$770,000 — \$220,000 from state contributions and \$550,000 in federal matching funds — for fiscal year 1982.

Chairman Hall called the action "disappointing," and said it will mean "basin commission programs will be diminished." He cited regional planning and coordination, the priorities process, flood plain management activities, and environmental analysis as areas of work which may suffer due to the move.

"Let me remind you that a zero percent increase is not just that — it's actually going backwards," Hall said.

Agencies name MRBC alternates

Three MRBC member agencies have named alternate delegates to the Commission. Robert O. Kluth succeeds William B. Patterson as the alternate representative of the Department of Agriculture. Kluth is a hydrologist with the water resources planning staff of the Soil Conservation Service in Lincoln, Neb.

Col. Donald M. Harris succeeds Gus Karabatsos as the alternate representing the Army Corps of Engineers. Colonel Harris is deputy division engineer of the Missouri River Division of the Corps, located in Omaha.

Jack Bale has been named an alternate for the Environmental Protection Agency. Bale is Missouri River Basin Coordinator with EPA region VII in Kansas City, Mo.