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Priorities to be subject of 19th meeting in Denver

Priorities for water resources activities in the Missouri River Basin will be one of the subjects of the 19th

quarterly meeting of the Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC). The commission will meet Feb. 2-3 at the Cosmopolitan Hotel in Denver.

The 10 Missouri Basin states have submitted their proposals for priorities for evaluation by the MRBC Priorities Committee. That work has essentially been completed.

The priorities will again be listed in six categories — basic data collection, planning-related research, special studies, regional or river basin planning, implementation studies and implementation programs or projects.

Priorities Chairman Paul Harley of the Department of the Interior presented an interim report at the 18th MRBC meeting in Omaha Nov. 11-12 in which he cited two new developments that will be reflected in the 1977 report.

The first is information that will be included concerning earlier proposals that now are reflected in scheduled funding by Congress or federal agencies for fiscal 1978.

The second is the coordination of proposals and priorities of the Missouri Basin Water Institute Consortium on planning-related research with MRBC proposals and priorities.

Harley also reported that the MRBC priorities process has "merited favorable reactions from the U.S. Water Resources Council."

He noted that the priorities function has recently become a mandatory activity not only for river basin commissions, but also for interagency committees in areas where river basin commissions do not exist.



Speaker recognized

MRCB Vice-Chairman Archie Chelseth of Minnesota, right, presents a certificate of appreciation to Kenneth Blackburn of the Old West Regional Commission. Blackburn addressed the noon luncheon of the MRBC 18th quarterly meeting in Omaha Nov. 4.



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2nd governors' conference on water to be in Omaha May 4

The 10 states which are members of the Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC) have announced a second Missouri River Basin governors' conference on water to be held in Omaha May 4.

The governors' conference will be held in conjunction with the 20th quarterly MRBC meeting and at the invitation of Nebraska Gov. J. James Exon.



Governor Exon

South Dakota Gov. Richard F. Kneip will serve as conference chairman.

The first governors' conference on water to be held in the last decade was Aug. 4 in St. Paul, Minn. At that time the governors met to discuss critical water issues.

A steering committee has been formed to develop a theme for the May governors' conference. The committee is made up of representatives of Nebraska, South Dakota, Kansas and the MRBC staff.

The May Missouri River Basin governors' conference is timed to precede the 1977 National Conference on Water in St. Louis May 23-25. The national conference will be sponsored by the U.S. Water Resources Council.

Zorinsky predicts water crisis

Former Omaha Mayor and Sen.-elect Edward Zorinsky said there is going to be more of a crisis concerning water in the future than there is regarding energy today.



Sen.-elect Zorinsky

Zorinsky, who welcomed the Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC) at the commission's 18th meeting in Omaha Nov. 11, said it's taken 50,000 years to populate this world with 4 billion people but it's only going to take 33 more years to reach 8 billion.

He said the increase will result in a crisis situation in agriculture and water resources upon which agriculture is dependent.

Zorinsky urged planning for water resources that maintains states rights. "I am very concerned that the states be allowed to plan their own future, their own destiny," the Senator-elect said.

Zorinsky concluded by saying, "If there is anything I can do to help any of the states regarding water, please feel free to call on me."

Zorinsky, a Democrat, was elected to fill the seat vacated by the retirement of Republican Sen. Roman Hruska.

MRBC publishes report on status of electric power in basin

The Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC) has published a report on the status of electric power in the Missouri River Basin, the first report of its kind.

The report is designed mainly for water and land use planners. The purpose is to provide information on the status of electric power generation, future needs and potentials for meeting those needs.

At the end of 1974, there were 399 electric generating plants located within the Missouri River Basin with an installed capacity of nearly 22,000 megawatts, according to the report. (One megawatt equals 1,000 kilowatts.)

Fossil-fired plants — those burning coal, oil, or natural gas — furnished nearly 75 percent of the total electric energy generated. Hydro-electric generation provided 20 percent. The remaining five

percent was generated by nuclear plants.

Water diverted for cooling in the generation process in 1974 amounted to approximately 4 billion gallons (12,280 acre-feet) a day. Of that water, about 57 million gallons (175 acre-feet) a day were lost to evaporation.

Meanwhile, the report notes that the projected demand for electricity in the Missouri River Basin could increase more than four times by the year 2000.

John W. Neuberger, MRBC chairman, said the report points up the difficulty of the job ahead in meeting needs of the basin's population and its agricultural and manufacturing potential through proper utilization of the available energy and water resources.

"It can be shown that the Missouri River Basin has both ample coal reserves and ample water," Neuberger said. "Unfortunately, they are very often hundreds of miles apart, as in the case of the Missouri River reservoirs and the coal deposits in Wyoming and Montana.

"Those planners and interested public on the periphery of the electric power industry should be able to use the report information in relating the industry needs to their particular planning area."

The report has gathered state concerns regarding electric power needs, problems and issues to assess their similarities. Some cost data for the various types of electric generation are also included.

The report will be updated annually under guidance of the MRBC Energy and Water Committee, Neuberger said.

Copies of the report are available by request to the commission.

MRBC sets Oct. 1 for 'first-cut' CCJP

The Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC) has adopted a goal of Oct. 1, 1977, for completion and transmittal of its "first-cut" comprehensive, coordinated joint plan (CCJP) for the entire Missouri River Basin.

The plan will be transmitted to the President and Congress through the U.S. Water Resources Council.

The CCJP is the plan adopted by the MRBC which serves currently as a basis or guide for the conservation, utilization, development or management of water and related land resources in the basin. It is prepared in accordance with the Water Resources Planning Act of 1965.

A work plan recommended to the commission by the Policy Committee calls for a first draft of the CCJP report to be completed by April 1. Commission staff are presently drafting parts of the report and have completed recording needs, problems and opportunities from materials accumulated for the ongoing national water assessment.

Potential projects and programs have been assembled for comparison with identified needs, problems and opportunities. Early in December potentials will be reviewed with designated principal contacts from

states and federal agencies and supplemented or charged in accordance with the latest status information.

Subbasin plan review and selection are being planned for January and February. These will include the state and federal agency contacts and will be the main vehicle for selecting elements to be included in the draft CCJP.

MRBC selected to help on water for energy assessments

The Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC) is one of only two organizations in the nation selected by the U.S. Water Resources Council (WRC) to assist in developing practical approaches to conducting national assessments of water for energy. The other is the Appalachia Regional Commission (ARC) headquartered in Pennsylvania.

Under the terms of the federal Non-Nuclear Energy Research and Development Act of 1974, WRC is responsible for assessments of water requirements and water supply availability for any non-nuclear energy technology. WRC's first task is to develop guidelines for conducting such assessments on a national basis.

The agreement of MRBC with WRC divides the commission's work into two phases. First, MRBC will review and provide recommendations on a set of draft assessment guidelines to be provided by WRC. Second, two example reports will be prepared to demonstrate the practical applications of the guidelines in the western United States. ARC will provide similar reports for the East.

The commission's Yellowstone Level B study team headquartered in Billings, Mont., and composed of Study Manager Bob Madsen and four assistants — Paul Shore, Don Ohnstad, Martin Oleson and Jeff White — will have the principal role in both phases of the project.

Bill Hutchinson, a senior river basin planner for MRBC in Omaha, will serve as liaison between the two offices.

Interior, Army meet with MRB states on water marketing

Assistant Secretaries Jack Horton of the Department of the Interior and Victor Veysey of the Department of the Army met with state members of the Missouri River Basin Commission in Denver Dec. 3 to discuss federal policy on industrial water marketing.

Purpose of the meeting was to get state views on suggested changes to the 1975 Interior-Army memorandum of understanding (MOU) regarding marketing water for industrial uses from the Missouri River main-stem reservoirs. The MOU expires Feb. 24.

Horton emphasized that a new MOU would not be negotiated before the Carter administration takes office in January. Rather, Interior and Army will present an unsigned document with state comments to the new administration for appropriate action.

It was agreed in the 1975 MOU that up to one million acre-feet of water could be made available for industrial purposes for at least 50 years. That water is earmarked for irrigation but not needed for that period of time.

Jim Rawlings of the Bureau of Reclamation reported at the 18th MRBC meeting in Omaha Nov. 12 that it was nearing agreement on the marketing of more than 600,000 acre-feet.



Rawlings

States were offered the first opportunity to contract for the water. Montana has since contracted for 300,000 acre-feet and South Dakota is negotiating a similar contract.

North Dakota has elected not to contract with the United States, but has agreed to let the Bureau of Reclamation contract directly with industry. State requirements such as water permits must be met, however.

In North Dakota, contract negotiations have been completed with ANG Coal Gasification Company for up to 17,000 acre-feet annually from Lake Sakakawea for use in a proposed coal gasification facility to be located in Mercer County, N.D.

Navigation season to break record

The 1976 navigation season was predicted to break all previous records for commercial tonnage shipped on the Missouri River.

The season was to end Dec. 11, according to Brig. Gen. William E. Read, chief of the Corps of Engineers' Missouri River Division.

Through mid-November, more than 2.8 million tons had been shipped, surpassing the 1971 season's tonnage of just under that figure. Shipments were anticipated to reach three million tons by the season's end.

The Missouri River is navigable from St. Louis, Mo., to Sioux City, Iowa. It has 123 commercial terminals that are serviced by up to 15 towboats during the navigation season.

Discount rate set at 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ percent

The interest rate used by federal agencies to formulate and evaluate plans for water and related land resources projects has been raised to 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ percent for the period Oct. 1, 1976, to Sept. 1, 1977.

The interest rate formula is used to discount future benefits and costs as a part of the process involved in formulating and evaluating comprehensive regional or river basin plans and federal water and related land resources projects.

The interest rate formula is based upon "the average yield during the preceding fiscal year on interest-bearing marketable securities of the United States which, at the time the computation is made, have terms of 15 years or more remaining to maturity" The formula also provides, however, that the rate may not be raised or lowered by more than one-quarter of one percent for any year.

The Treasury Department notified the U.S. Water Resources Council Oct. 15 that the rate would be seven percent based upon the average yield of the marketable securities during the last fiscal year. Since the rate for fiscal 1976 was 6 $\frac{1}{8}$ percent, the rate for fiscal 1977 is 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ percent.



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