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Missouri Basin governors resolve to support authorized water projects

Governors and representatives of Missouri River Basin states have voted to reaffirm support for construction of authorized water resource development projects in the Missouri Basin.

The resolution was offered by Gov. Arthur Link of North Dakota and was one of five adopted at the conclusion of the 2nd Missouri River Basin Governors' Conference on Water May 4.

The vote for project support was unanimous with Gov. Joseph Teasdale of Missouri abstaining.

Other resolutions adopted by the governors support an increase in the 160-acre limit on lands in reclamation projects, support development of a cooperative water data system in the Missouri River Basin, support an increase in government loan rates to at least \$2.50 on wheat, and oppose Corps of Engineers' broad regulatory authority over all waters of the United States.

Gov. J. James Exon of Nebraska, conference host,

forwarded copies of the resolutions to members of Congress, the President and heads of various federal agencies including the U.S. Water Resources Council and the Office of Management and Budget.

The resolutions also were distributed at the National Conference on Water May 23-24 in St. Louis to focus national attention on Missouri River Basin problems.

The third Missouri River Basin Governors' Conference on Water will be held next year in Montana at the invitation of Gov. Thomas Judge.

The Omaha governors' conference was held in conjunction with the 20th regular quarterly meeting of the state-federal Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC).

Proceedings of the conference will be available after July 1. Copies may be obtained by writing Missouri River Basin Commission, Suite 403, 10050 Regency Circle, Omaha, NE 68114.



Six governors attend MRB water conference

Six Missouri River Basin governors were in Omaha May 3-4 to discuss water. Pictured from left are Govs. Arthur Link, North Dakota; Joseph Teasdale, Missouri; J. James Exon, Nebraska, conference host; Ed Herschler, Wyoming; and Thomas Judge, Montana. At the right is John W. Neuberger, chairman, Missouri River Basin Commission. Gov. Richard Kneip, South Dakota, attended the conference but was not available when this picture was taken.

MRBC to meet in Jackson Hole, Wyo.

The 21st regular meeting of the Missouri River Basin Commission will be Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 1-2, in Jackson Hole, Wyo.

Activities at the meeting will include presentation of the draft "Missouri River Basin Water Resources Plan," which is currently undergoing review by state and federal agencies.

Approval is expected for a final report to be published and forwarded to Washington by Nov. 1.

Action at the 20th commission meeting in Omaha May 4-5 included approval of a year-end printing date for the commission's annual schedule of water resource priorities in the Missouri River Basin.

Purpose of moving up the publication date is to have the priorities prepared in time for the start of each new congressional session in Washington.

In commission-related action, the 10 state MRBC members in caucus resolved to oppose a recommendation of the Office of Management and Budget to discontinue the U.S. Water Resources Council's state advisory committee.

"In light of President Carter's statements regarding increased state participation in formulating governmental policies, now is hardly the time to dismantle an institution that provides one valuable avenue for state involvement in federal program planning and management in water resources," the resolution said.

Hamon named MRBC director of planning



Hamon

Carroll Hamon has been named director of planning of the state-federal Missouri River Basin Commission. The appointment was effective June 6.

Hamon replaced Nicholas L. Barbarossa, who resigned March 25.

Hamon has been with the Commission since 1972, first as director of the Platte River Basin Level B Study in

Nebraska and later as principal river basin planner for the preparation of the Missouri River Basin water resources plan.

Former employers include the California Department of Water Resources, Leedshill-DeLeuw Consulting Engineers of San Francisco (on a flood control project in East Pakistan) and the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

Hamon, 46, was born and raised on a farm in northeast Kansas.

He and his wife, Betty, have three children.

MRBC Chairman John W. Neuberger said Hamon has demonstrated his ability to work with state and federal members on the commission as well as with outside organizations and water user interests.

"Successful planning requires the ability to communicate as well as understand the needs and desires of people. I believe Carroll is particularly strong in that area," Neuberger said.

Governors offer drought assessments

Drought in the Missouri River Basin was a major factor in bringing governors together in Omaha May 3-4 at the Second Missouri River Basin Governors' Conference on Water. Consequently, drought was a major topic of discussion.

Here's a state-by-state assessment of the drought and related subjects as summarized in the Omaha World-Herald May 5:

North Dakota — Drought has caused shortages for a number of communities. North Dakota has yielded 560,000 productive acres to store water to prevent flooding downstream on the Missouri and hasn't received economic benefits from that storage. State officials now want some of that water for irrigation through the Garrison diversion project, but the Carter administration has held up construction. North Dakotans are asking whether their interests aren't being ignored in favor of national goals and downstream needs.

Missouri — As the state at the bottom of the basin, Missouri is threatened by excessive withdrawals upriver, but "Missourians will not drink the dregs of water from upstream states," said Gov. Joseph Teasdale. Drought caused 95 of 114 counties to be declared disaster areas last year, and damaged the tourist industry. Missourians will insist on minimum streamflows to get enough water for navigation, drinking, irrigation and other uses.

South Dakota — Drought caused widespread damage to grazing lands and other farming operations, and South Dakotans want some of the water stored behind four Missouri River dams. But the Carter administration opposes the major irrigation project, Oahe. The day may be coming when Americans pay "as high a price for water as for natural gas," said Gov. Richard Kneip.

Montana — Drought also is harming Montana, though the state has more water and coal than its residents can use. But Montanans are increasingly unwilling to compromise their life-style to provide power to states which waste energy. This means, said Gov. Thomas Judge, no Montana law or environmental standard will be compromised, strip mining will be watchdogged and water and energy must be wisely used.

Iowa — The Missouri River provides much of the water western Iowans depend on, and Iowans will insist current flow in the river past Sioux City not be diminished. Iowa has reservations over coal-slurry pipelines and other withdrawals which consume water and degrade quality.

Minnesota — Minnesota's water future is "beset with uncertainty" and more efforts by the Missouri River Basin Commission are needed to ensure proper uses.

Kansas — Because of drought and declining supplies, Kansas has begun a major assessment of water use and needs.

Colorado — In some areas, drought has cut water supplies to one-third of normal. Since Colorado has contracts to deliver water to many states, Colorado users, especially agriculture operations, are concerned about cutbacks. More underground water is being exploited.

Wyoming — The state is "energy-rich and water-poor," said Gov. Ed Herschler. Using water to transport coal through slurry pipelines would deplete supplies. Energy projects arising in the west will put heavy demands on water needed by agriculture.

Nebraska — In a prepared text, Gov. J. James Exon said he formed a task force on drought in February in the second driest winter in the past 46 years. He said the drought coupled with lower commodity prices has resulted in a "credit crunch" in the agricultural community. Nebraska feels all basin states should have the opportunity to address the issue of water marketing from the main stem Missouri reservoirs.

MRBC chairman urges basinwide study

John W. Neuberger, chairman of the Missouri River Basin Commission, told the Missouri Basin governors that MRBC should initiate a study during the next year to reconcile differences in basinwide water estimates.

Neuberger addressed the Second Missouri Basin Governors' Conference on Water May 4 in Omaha.

Neuberger said inadequate data regarding how much water is available in the Missouri River Basin for irrigation, energy development, and other purposes "seriously compromise our ability to accurately determine impacts of proposed developments."

The proposed MRBC study "would be aimed at assembling the available data on streamflow, collecting and examining historical and current water use information, relating ground water pumpage to surface water flows, and determining the relationships between water use and streamflow," Neuberger said.

"A final phase of the study should consider utilizing a model capable of applying the relationships between water use and streamflow as a basis for determining the effects throughout the basin of alternative water management and development action."



Omaha mayor welcomes governors

Mayor Robert Cunningham welcomes the 2nd Missouri River Basin Governors' Conference on Water to the host city of Omaha.

HEW, EPA name new MRBC members

The U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have named new members to the Missouri River Basin Commission.

Richard E. Burnett, HEW member, was appointed acting regional director of HEW's Region VII in Kansas City in February. He had been deputy regional director since 1970.



Burnett



Wright

Charles V. Wright, EPA member, is acting regional administrator of EPA's Region VII in Kansas City. Prior to his advancement this year he had been deputy regional administrator since 1972.



Rigby addresses governors' conference

Ray Rigby, chairman of the Interstate Conference on Water Problems (ICWP), addresses the joint luncheon of the 2nd Missouri River Basin Governors' Conference and 20th quarterly meeting of the Missouri River Basin Commission. Rigby, Rexburg, Idaho, had recently returned from the United Nations Conference on Water in Argentina.



Krause receives BuRec citizen award

Keith S. Krause, left, Kansas member on the Missouri River Basin Commission, was presented a citizen award by the Bureau of Reclamation May 4 at the Missouri River Basin Governors' Conference luncheon. Keith Higginson, right, commissioner of reclamation, made the presentation following an address to the conference.

Interior Secretary Andrus sets targets for national water policy formulation

President Carter has set the stage for a national water policy to emphasize conservation, reduce waste of tax dollars, minimize environmental costs, insure safety and coordinate federal, state and local programs so they do not work at cross purposes, according to Interior Secretary and U.S. Water Resources Council Chairman Cecil D. Andrus.

Addressing the National Conference on Water, Andrus said: "Water is a finite resource, and what the government can do to deliver it where needed is also finite."

Andrus listed nine points which he said must be faced during the next six months in putting together a comprehensive national water policy. The Secretary proposed:

— Sunset legislation should automatically deauthorize water projects which have been authorized for a number of years — he suggested eight years — but not yet funded or under construction. "This would assure an up-to-date analysis before reauthorization and would enable us to assure that they meet the test of fitness for the situation as it is known today," Andrus said.

— Increased cost sharing by the states and non-federal entities for water projects is essential. "There are obvious inequities and the impact on the federal budget is too large," Andrus said. "And the system encourages waste where the price of water is below the actual cost."

— Cooperative efforts between the states and the federal government must be undertaken to eliminate laws, rules and institutions which now hamper integrated water management.

— All federal programs should be scrutinized to seek new methods of encouraging water conservation. "Some ways we can do this is to require individual water meters for residences in all cities receiving water from federally aided systems; set water efficiency requirements for irrigation uses for those receiving federal assistance in agriculture; establish water efficiency standards for various types of construction where federal funds are involved or where federal guarantees are made for the mortgages," Andrus said.

— "Quantification of 'reserved rights' for Indian reservation and other federal lands is essential to rational planning for the future," Andrus said. "The more we continue to plan and use water resources without regard to determination of Indian and reserved water rights, the more we compound the problem."

— Safety of water projects cannot be taken for granted. "It must be established and proven in all cases," Andrus said.

— "Waste water reuse, artificial ground water recharge, minimum streamflows, and safe drinking water are primary objectives — not just afterthoughts or appendages," he said.

— The 1973 "principles and standards" adopted by the Water Resources Council should be modified to President Carter's goals and this should serve as the framework for the water policy review and proposals.

— "The primary goal is conservation and more efficient use of water," Andrus emphasized in his final point.

Declaring that water too often has been misallocated, misused and wasted, Andrus said it will not be easy but it is essential that a new policy be instituted.

"What we are talking about in essence is caring — caring about the environment, caring about wasted tax money, caring about the safety of fellow citizens, caring about the quality of our own lives and the lives of our children," Andrus concluded. "We have to care enough to change some of our ways — ways which seemed to have served well in the old days but which no longer are adequate."

"Missouri will chart its own course in water," Missouri governor says

Gov. Joseph Teasdale of Missouri told the National Conference on Water in St. Louis May 23, "It's time for state self-determination in water.

"My administration will not be content with federal determination of needs and locations for water development; we will request federal assistance where



Governor Teasdale

needed, but we will chart our own courses," the Missouri governor said.

"Water is too precious to waste, yet it is usually too inexpensive to treasure," Teasdale told the conference.

"Our challenge in government is to plan the wise use of water so that it is always available, yet never so expensive that citizens are denied the pleasures that it affords."

Meantime, the State of Missouri is looking at water rights legislation. There are no statutes regarding water rights in Missouri.

Governor Teasdale said that if a water shortage comes about, available water may have to be regulated as to which water uses and users have priority.

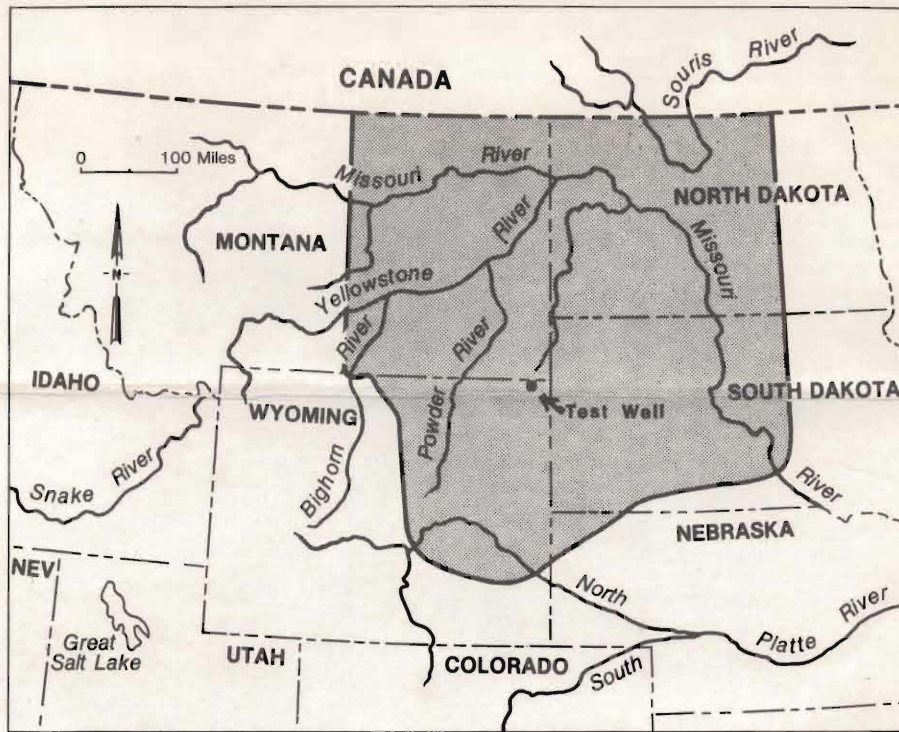
He has directed the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to assist a subcommittee of the Missouri House Agriculture Committee in examining the need for water rights legislation.



New MRBC vice-chairman gets gavel

John E. Acord, Montana, right, receives the gavel as the new chairman of the state caucus and vice-chairman of the Missouri River Basin Commission. Relinquishing the caucus gavel is Archie D. Chelseth, Minnesota, the outgoing MRBC vice-chairman.

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U. S. Department of the Interior/Geological Survey

Ground water tests encouraging in coal area

Preliminary results from the first deep tests of ground water in the Northern Great Plains are encouraging, according to the U.S. Geological Survey, Department of the Interior. The tests indicate that a properly developed well might pump as much as 1,600 gallons of water per minute from a level about 300 feet below the land

surface. The well is part of a study being done in cooperation with the states of Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota to evaluate the ground-water resources in a 188,000-square-mile region that includes the coal-rich area of the Northern Great Plains.



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