

Doc.  
Y 3.  
M69/2:  
3/v.4/no.6



# basin bulletin

Vol. 4, No. 6

NORTH DAKOTA  
STATE UNIVERSITY

SEP 7 1977

LIBRARY

July-August 1977

## MRBC adopts regional water plan

The Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC) adopted a regional plan for water resources management Aug. 1 by majority vote.

The action was taken at the 21st regular quarterly meeting of the state-federal commission in Jackson Hole, Wyo.

Adoption of the plan required a vote because the State of Missouri member objected to inclusion of five water resource projects which President Carter recommended not to be funded in fiscal year 1978.

Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming voted for adoption of the plan as did the 10 federal agencies which are members of the commission. Minnesota was absent.

The 310-page water resources plan contains 442 program and project recommendations in addition to the controversial Narrows Irrigation Project in Colorado, Hillsdale and Grove Lake Projects in Kansas, the Garrison Diversion Project in North Dakota and the Oahe Diversion Project in South Dakota.

(Editor's note: The Hillsdale Project and the Garrison Diversion Project were reinstated by Congress and were included in the funding bill signed recently by President Carter.)

Missouri's position on the five projects was stated in a letter from Gov. Joseph Teasdale to MRBC Chairman John W. Neuberger.

Governor Teasdale said the projects should be deleted from the MRBC plan while Congress and the executive branch deliberate on the 1978 budget. The projects could be considered again at a later date, he said.

MRBC Vice-Chairman John E. Acord of Montana said the majority of states favored inclusion of the projects in

the basin plan because of previous congressional authorization of the projects, because of contractual commitments for water and construction, and because of the feeling that executive branch budget recommendations are only recommendations until enacted by Congress and, therefore, should not constrain state or regional planning.

The adopted plan is titled "The Missouri River Basin Water Resources Plan." The first edition of the plan will be published for transmittal by Oct. 1. The plan will be updated every two years.



### **Eisel named WRC director**

*Leo M. Eisel assumed duties as director of the U.S. Water Resources Council (WRC) Aug. 22. Eisel, who was director of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, replaced Acting Director Gary Cobb. Cobb was named director of the Office of Water Research and Technology in the Department of the Interior.*



## Andrus extends water policy review

Secretary of the Interior Cecil D. Andrus has extended the national water policy review now underway.

The new timetable calls for the record to be closed Sept. 15 for public comments on the option and issue papers published in the Federal Register July 15 and 25.

In the original timetable, the public record was to close Aug. 20 with the President's policy announcement Nov. 1.

Andrus said in a news release Aug. 4 that the policy review would be extended 90 days in response to congressional and gubernatorial requests. No new date was given for the President's announcement.



Andrus

States which are members of the Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC) had requested July 18 that more time be granted in order to prepare for hearings on the water policy which were held in eight cities between July 28 and Aug. 2.

The hearing for the Missouri River Basin area was held in Denver July 28-29. The study policy group, consisting of the Department of the Interior, Office of Management and Budget, and Council on Environmental Quality, appointed John W. Neuberger, MRBC chairman, as moderator.

Other members of the hearing panel were Donald Crabill, deputy associate director of the Office of Management and Budget, and three representatives of the Department of the Interior — Leo Krulitz, solicitor; Dan Beard, deputy assistant secretary for land and water resources; and Gail Klapper, White House fellow.

Ninety-two persons testified at the two-day hearing including Colorado Gov. Richard Lamm and Wyoming Gov. Ed Herschler.

Moderator Neuberger said the intent of the hearings was met as evidenced by the broad range of discussion stimulated by the issue and option papers prepared by federal task forces.

He said there was criticism, however, regarding the short timetable for the policy study, and there were fears based on an interpretation of the issue and option papers by some that federal controls might be established over water rights administered by Western states.

"The hearings served a vital purpose in bringing forth valuable information that needs to be considered in any water policy reform," Neuberger said.

Andrus, in the Aug. 4 release, said, "We do not advocate and never have advocated federal water rights that would preempt or even infringe upon state water rights and private water rights.

"We recognize we are dealing with the nation's most important resource and are aware of its value," Andrus said.

"The Carter Administration is seeking to establish the best uses of water and will work to establish criteria to identify those uses," Andrus said. "Water is not only a tremendous energy issue now and in the future, but it touches on how the West will continue to grow."

## Decline continues in stored Missouri main stem water

Reservoir storage on the Missouri River main stem dropped by 1.6 million acre-feet in July, the Missouri River Division of the Corps of Engineers reports.

It was the fifth month in a row that flows into the main stem reservoirs were below normal, resulting in the lowest level of storage in more than 10 years.

June, which historically has recorded large water increases, recorded no increase for the first time, the corps reported.

Despite the decline in storage, however, there is ample water in the system to serve the area's power needs, and irrigators, recreationists and municipal water users continue to have adequate water, the corps said.

System storage behind the six dams at the end of July was near the top of the multipurpose conservation pool with 57.1 million acre-feet on tap.

The corps says that even if the drought continues, there will be enough water to serve all functions for several years.



## MRBC completes regional participation in national assessment

The Missouri River Basin Commission completed regional participation in the 1975 National Assessment of Water and Related Land Resources by approving publication of a summary report at its Aug. 1-2 meeting in Jackson Hole, Wyo.

The "Specific Problem Analysis Summary Report" describes the national assessment process and MRBC's role in the nationwide three-year effort. It includes a brief description of the Missouri Basin, its resources and its people, with emphasis on the water and land resources.

A. C. (Connie) Griesel, MRBC regional assessment director, said the 10 Missouri Basin states estimate in the report that in 1975 about 17.5 million acre-feet of surface and ground water were being consumed for various purposes. Ninety percent of the water consumed was for irrigation.

"The states also estimated that the total amount of water consumed in the basin will grow to about 28.5 million acre-feet by 2000. Irrigated lands, now totalling 11.5 million acres, are estimated to grow to nearly 17.5 million acres," Griesel said.

Griesel said some of the estimates of water use submitted for the report varied considerably from past estimates. "The result was a recommendation for additional studies of current and projected water uses and water availability," he said.

The report contains 17 other recommendations including one for completion of ongoing federal agency studies and state water plans.

The Missouri River Basin is one of 21 regions in the national assessment. The U.S. Water Resources Council, national sponsor, will publish a nationwide summary later this year that will include a chapter on each of the 21 regions.

### How much water in a 12-oz. can?

A 12-ounce can of beverage, of course, contains 12 ounces. But, according to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), it takes about 66.6 quarts of water to get the can and its contents to the supermarket.

This perspective on water-use information is contained in an article published in the USGS 1976 Annual Report.



USGS hydrologists use a 12-ounce can as an example for exploring the ramifications of a simple daily water-consumption to remind us that the act of consuming a can of root beer is the culmination of a long chain of processes requiring water.

"It takes water to clean the can before it is filled, water to mine the coal that is used in converting iron ore to metallic iron in making steel used in the can, and water for cooling in the thermal electric plants that supply these industries with electric energy," the article says.

The article says that for most of the nation the period of free and easily developed water supplies has ended, and that in some areas, water use is approaching or exceeding the available supply.

While the nation as a whole is not running out of water, "much still remains to be done toward modifying the occurrence of water to better fit regional demands, and, more importantly, many options for modifying water use and reuse remain to be explored," the article says.



### Griesel retires again

A. C. (Connie) Griesel says he will retire for good this time. Griesel retired from the Corps of Engineers in 1974. Shortly afterward he joined the Missouri River Basin Commission as regional director of the recently completed National Water Assessment. Now he's looking forward to full-time golf in Bella Vista, Ark.



## Basin briefs . . .

The Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC) will hold its 22nd regular quarterly meeting Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 2-3, at the New Tower Hotel Court in Omaha.

\* \* \*

Herbert R. Rinder of Chicago has been named alternate Federal Power Commission member on the Missouri River Basin Commission. He replaces Orel Haukedahl, who retired.

\* \* \*

The 1977 annual meeting of the Interstate Conference on Water Problems (ICWP) will be held Aug. 29 through Sept. 1 in Minneapolis. The meeting will be held in cooperation with the U.S. Water Resources Council (WRC).

\* \* \*

Copies of "Proceedings of the Second Missouri River Basin Governors' Conference on Water" are still available at no charge from MRBC. Nearly 3,000 copies have been distributed to date.

\* \* \*

The Bureau of Reclamation reports it disbursed or transferred to other federal agencies for disbursement more than \$23.1 million in federal drought relief aid through July 29 in 17 Western states. Requests for an additional \$24.9 million of aid were approved.

## Judge says Bighorn suit stays in Wyoming court

(The following is reprinted from High Country News)

The state of Wyoming has succeeded in convincing a federal judge that a court suit it has brought to adjudicate the water of the Bighorn River Basin was not directed specifically against the Indian tribes of the Wind River Reservation.

Because the tribes were named in the court action and because their reserved rights are a matter of federal law, and not of state law, the U.S. government argued the issue should be decided in federal court. U.S. District Court Judge Ewing Kerr, however, referred to U.S. Supreme Court and state court cases that indicated it could be decided in state court, adding, "It has been the consistent policy of this court to protect state court jurisdiction in those cases where there is doubt."

He argued that the federal forum would be "relatively inconvenient," that it would be desirable to avoid piecemeal litigation, that the state court first obtained jurisdiction, and that there were extensive state and private claims involved.

Water of the Bighorn River Basin is covered by the Yellowstone Compact. Kerr ruled although the compact involves three states, its existence didn't mean the Wyoming court couldn't have jurisdiction over the Bighorn water adjudication. "If there is any collision between compact provisions and the rights awarded by the state court, these issues can ultimately be reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court," he said.

Wyoming Attorney General Frank Mendocino expects the case to go to the U.S. Supreme Court on at least one issue — the date of the Indian rights. Mendocino called Kerr's decision a "major victory."



**Missouri River Basin Commission**  
Suite 403, 10050 Regency Circle  
Omaha, Nebraska 68114

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID  
MISSOURI RIVER BASIN COMMISSION  
FIRST CLASS-BULK RATE



North Dakota State University  
Documents Librarian  
Fargo, ND 58102

20