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Missouri Basin governors to meet in Montana in May

A third Missouri River Basin governors' conference on water will be held May 23-25 in Great Falls, Mont.

Montana Gov. Thomas Judge will host the meeting and serve as the conference chairman.

The announcement of the governors' conference was made by Montana's representative to the Missouri River Basin Commission—John E. Acord—at the commission's 23rd quarterly meeting in Kansas City, Kan.

The governors will meet in May in conjunction with the commission's 24th quarterly meeting at the Heritage Inn in Great Falls.



Governor Judge

A steering committee has been formed to develop a theme for the conference and to suggest water policy issues that may be addressed.

As in the past, the conference is expected to develop a regional position on questions that may include the developing national water policy and the President's natural resources reorganization study.

Members of the steering committee are John Acord, who also serves as MRBC vice-chairman; Robert Dunkeson, Missouri; Vern Butler, South Dakota; and Richard Brown, MRBC executive secretary.

The commission will hold its 25th meeting in North Dakota in August.

MRBC states urge appointment of chairman, support stronger water act

State members of the Missouri River Basin Commission adopted a resolution Feb. 1 in Kansas City, Kan., urging President Carter to appoint a new commission chairman as soon as possible.

The position has been vacant since Oct. 26, when John W. Neuberger resigned.

The resolution, adopted at a caucus prior to the commission's 23rd quarterly meeting, also urged the President to consult on the appointment with governors in the 10 states served by the commission.

The state caucus voiced unanimous support of legislative efforts to strengthen the Water Resources Planning Act of 1965.

The 10-state caucus urged the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Resources of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources to hold hearings to solicit state views "at the earliest possible date in 1978."

MRBC report foresees adequate electric generating capacity

The Missouri River Basin will have adequate electric generating capacity through 1985. And adequate capacity is being planned beyond that, at least for the near term.

That conclusion is contained in a recently completed report by the Missouri River Basin Commission titled "Status of Electric Power in the Missouri River Basin."

The conclusion is based on information provided by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the 10 states in the Missouri River Basin. It indicates that the 9 million residents in the region will not face rotating blackouts and government-imposed restrictions on electricity use that a year-end report by the Edison Electric Institute says may develop in other parts of the nation.

The report on the status of electric power is the commission's second annual report examining electricity supply and demand for the Missouri River Basin, a geographic area covering 518,000 square miles and including all or parts of Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming.

The report reviews ongoing regional energy studies, environmental issues, energy research and development activities, federal and state laws pertaining to energy, and significant state energy issues and energy conservation strategies.

MRBC subject of power cooperative resolution

The regional commission concept has received a vote of confidence from the rural electric cooperatives in a large portion of the Missouri River Basin.

The Basin Electric Power Cooperative, representing utilities in North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska, Minnesota and Iowa, adopted a resolution at its annual meeting urging continued cooperation with leaders of the Missouri River Basin Commission and the Old West Regional Commission.

The resolution said:

"WHEREAS, the need to attack problems of planning and conservation and the development of resources on a regional basis has not diminished. As principal supporters, rural electric cooperatives were pleased when such long-awaited regional commissions as the Old West Regional Commission (OWRC) and the Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC) were formed in 1972. Rural electrics also supported and took leadership in the effort to secure funding for these agencies, and

"WHEREAS, we commend the Governors, the Congressional delegations and the many rural leaders in the Missouri Basin states for their support and efforts leading to the formation of these two commissions which are proving to be of mutual benefit to all states involved, and

"WHEREAS, the development of sufficient electrical energy is vitally important in providing an adequate standard of living for the Upper Missouri River Basin people, and in fostering increased agricultural production to meet world needs;

"NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we are pleased that leaders of the Old West Regional Commission and the Missouri River Basin Commission are in contact with rural electric leaders, and urge continuation and expansion of this relationship."



Kansas governor addresses MRBC luncheon

Kansas Gov. Robert F. Bennett addressed a luncheon Feb. 1 prior to the opening of the 23rd quarterly meeting of the Missouri River Basin Commission in Kansas City, Kan.

Water problems in the Midwest could reach dangerous proportions unless the public is made aware of the seriousness of the situation, Bennett said.

"It hasn't been until communities have run out of water that the public has been willing to accept the fact that water isn't an eternally renewable commodity," he said.

Research proposal arises from MRBC ground water workshop

A research proposal to evaluate legal and institutional arrangements associated with ground water allocation has arisen from a workshop sponsored last March by the Missouri River Basin Commission and the Missouri River Basin Water Institute Consortium.

Funding is currently being sought for the project to be conducted by members of the consortium with principal investigators at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

"While most Missouri Basin states have procedures for allocating rights to use ground water, most states have not dealt with the question of whether a ground water supply should be exhausted, and, if so, at what rate," the draft research proposal states.

"A related issue is how ground water depletions affect streamflow and rights to use that streamflow."

Other issues mentioned in the proposal are allocation of artificially stored ground water, coordination of ground and surface water uses to achieve the most efficient use of water from all sources, and the impact and integration of water allocation and water quality policies.

Objectives of the proposed research are as follows:

- Describe and compare existing legal and institutional arrangements associated with ground water allocation for each Missouri River Basin state.
- Develop criteria and methodologies for evaluating the legal and institutional arrangements associated with ground water allocation.
- Evaluate current legal and institutional arrangements associated with ground water allocation for each Missouri River Basin state according to the criteria developed above.
- Identify legal and institutional arrangements associated with ground water allocation from selected states outside the Missouri River Basin which appear to effectively address similar problems, develop new legal and institutional arrangements, and evaluate these alternatives (including implementation considerations) according to the criteria developed in the second objective.

Kansas, interior name new MRBC members

The State of Kansas and the Department of the Interior have named new representatives to the Missouri River Basin Commission.

James A. Power Jr. was recently named by Kansas Gov. Robert Bennett to replace Keith S. Krause, who retired. Power is executive director of the Kansas Water Resources Board in Topeka.

Robert S. Sanchez Jr., Denver, is the new commissioner from the Department of the Interior. Sanchez serves as the interior secretary's field representative in Denver.

Terry Lynott is interior's new first alternate. Lynott, interior's Missouri Basin planning officer, replaces Paul Harley, who retired in December.

Ben Stephenson has been named principal alternate on the commission from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Stephenson is regional director of the Office of Flood Insurance, Kansas City.

Joseph Gibson has been named as an alternate member from the State of Minnesota. Gibson is a water resources planner in the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Canada's new observer of commission activities is Dennis A. Davis of Fisheries and Environment Canada, Regina, Saskatchewan.



Power



Sanchez

Federal government major land manager in some Missouri Basin states

Approximately one-third of the total area of the United States is public land for which the federal government is responsible, but the percentages vary substantially from state to state.

In the 10 states of the Missouri River Basin, the statistics range from 48 percent federal ownership in Wyoming down to 1 percent in Nebraska, Kansas and Iowa.

The federal government holds 36 percent of the land in Colorado and 30 percent in Montana.

Outside the region, Alaska is 96 percent in federal ownership, followed by Nevada with 87 percent, Utah with 66 percent, Idaho with 64 percent and Oregon with 53 percent.

Federal ownership in all 10 Missouri River Basin states, according to the General Services Administration, is as follows:

State	Total Acreage	Federal Acreage	%
Colorado	66,485,760	23,983,199	36
Iowa	35,860,480	224,296	1
Kansas	52,510,720	712,518	1
Minnesota	51,205,760	3,411,906	7
Missouri	44,248,320	2,149,931	5
Montana	93,271,040	27,665,588	30
Nebraska	49,031,680	694,176	1
North Dakota	44,452,480	2,320,902	5
South Dakota	48,881,920	3,296,012	7
Wyoming	62,343,040	29,829,563	48

Winter increases demand for hydroelectric power, brightens outlook for reservoir storage

This winter's high winds and cold temperatures caused a strong demand for hydroelectric power from the Missouri River main stem dams.

To help meet this need, hydroelectric power production at the upstream projects, Fort Peck and Garrison, was increased 10 percent above planned levels, the Corps of Engineers' reservoir control center reported.

The additional energy was made available in view of the better than normal plains snow cover and mountain snowpack which are expected to provide above normal inflows to the reservoir system this spring and summer. System power generation for January was 722 million kilowatt hours.

This year a heavy snow cover extends over the plains areas of northern South Dakota, North Dakota, and the portion of Montana which drains into the Missouri River. In addition, snow surveys compiled near the end of January indicate that snow accumulations at the mountain snow courses are averaging 125 to 130 percent of normal.

Melt conditions later this spring and summer and additional accumulations of snow could increase runoff into the reservoir system to near normal or well above. This runoff will be very welcome to help refill the storage reserves which were used last year during the severe drought, the control center reported.

Did you know that the nation's largest powerplant consumes no fuel? It's the Grand Coulee Dam on the Columbia River in Washington, which last year produced 22.7 billion kilowatt hours—enough electricity to heat and light the homes of 8 million people.



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Basin briefs.....

Navigation totals on the Missouri River set a new record during the 8-month navigation season in 1977. The 1977 figure was nearly 3.3 million tons, up from the previous high of slightly more than 3.1 million tons in 1976.

The Secretary of the Interior has sent a proposal to Congress that would designate the Lewis and Clark Trail as a National Historic Trail in the National Trails system. The Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804-1806 is considered by many historians to be the most important event in the development of the Western United States.

Dee C. Hansen, Utah state engineer, is the new chairman of the Interstate Conference on Water Problems (ICWP). Gene Hollenstein of Minnesota is first vice-chairman, Dayle Williamson of Nebraska is secretary-treasurer and John E. Acord of Montana is a member of the board of directors.

The National Wildlife Federation is featuring the endangered peregrine falcon on posters promoting National Wildlife Week March 19-25. This year's theme is "Wildlife Needs You."

The Department of the Interior filed a draft environmental impact statement Feb. 1 on alternatives to the Garrison (N.D.) Diversion Unit with the Environmental Protection Agency. The draft supplements an environmental statement filed in 1974. It discusses six alternatives for the project ranging from no further work up to the 250,000-acre project now authorized by Congress.

The Secretary of the Interior has asked Congress to extend the Jan. 31 deadline for completion of projects authorized under the 1977 Emergency Drought Act. The act gave the secretary temporary emergency authority to make grants and interest-free loans to fund water construction, management and conservation projects to ease the impact of the severe drought which hit most of the West in 1976 and 1977.

"Resources for Food and Living: Land, Water and Energy" will be the theme of the 33rd annual meeting of the Soil Conservation Society of America, July 30 through Aug. 2 in Denver.

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