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NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY



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RBC funds approved for FY '81

President Jimmy Carter signed a bill into law Oct. 1 appropriating fiscal year 1981 funds for river basin commissions, the U.S. Water Resources Council, and state title III water resources planning grants.

The "Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 1981" (H.R. 7590) appropriates nearly \$24.8 million for water resources activities. The amount is \$12 million less than the administration sought, with the largest cut made in the amount requested for state planning grants authorized by title III of the Water Resources Planning Act of 1965 (P.L. 89-80).

The administration had asked for \$21 million for the state grants; the appropriation was \$10 million, approximately the same amount appropriated in FY '80. The bill also reduced the administration request for WRC administrative monies by \$1 million, to \$4.8 million.

In addition, the appropriation included \$3.4 million for river basin commissions, \$4.2 million for WRC assessments and planning activities, and \$2.4 million for the Upper Mississippi River Basin Commission Master Plan development.

These water resources appropriations were made under authority of the Water Resources Act of 1965. Several bills in Congress seeking to amend the 1965 act delayed the action. At least two of those bills, H.R. 2610 and S. 1639, have been reported out by committees but are not scheduled for floor action before Congress adjourns.

Missouri Basin states sent a resolution to Congress in July asking that water resources funds be continued according to the 1965 authorization and pledging to work with Congress in FY '81 to amend the 1965 act.

MRBC to meet in Omaha Oct. 29-30

The 34th regular quarterly meeting of the Missouri River Basin Commission will be an information session in Omaha Oct. 29-30, according to Chairman Millard W. Hall.

"The past two business meetings have seen final approval of two major planning efforts, the commission's Missouri River Basin Water Resources Management Plan and the Upper Missouri River Basin Level B Study," Chairman Hall said. "Other studies now underway or just beginning will have the commission's attention at this meeting."



Chairman Hall

- The commission will hear about the MRBC Flood Plain Management Study scheduled to begin this year. The study will seek to develop a flood plain management framework program that is compatible among the five states along the Missouri River below Sioux City, Iowa.
- The commission also will hear a report on the activities of the ground water depletion work group involved in the three-year basinwide hydrology study now in progress under MRBC leadership.
- The Western Coal Planning Assistance Project concluded in August under joint MRBC and U.S. Geological Survey (RALI Program) sponsorship will be described. A written report will be available later this fall.

Great Plains Humorist Roger Welsch of Lincoln, Neb., will address the noon luncheon Wednesday, Oct. 29. The opening session of the business meeting will follow at 2 p.m.

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MRBC tells plans to federal budget office

This year, for the second time, chairmen of the six river basin commissions authorized by title II of the Water Resources Planning Act of 1965 were asked to meet with representatives of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget to review and explain commission budget requests.

Missouri River Basin Commission Staff Director Carroll M. Hamon appeared at the Sept. 18 session for Chairman Millard W. Hall. Hamon told budget office officials that MRBC coordination activities have been centered generally around federal and state water and related land resources management activities, only touching on local and nongovernmental plans.



Hamon

He predicted, however, that "by FY '82, the commission will be putting more emphasis on coordination of local and nongovernmental planning, making funds for this activity particularly crucial."

He also predicted that the commission's established planning process, which he called "instrumental" in the past in avoiding duplication of effort and in proper scheduling

of activities, "will be even more important in the future as competition increases for a finite supply of precious water."

Two studies continuing in FY '82 will supplement the regional planning activity, Hamon said. These are the Missouri Basin Hydrology Study and the Lower Missouri River Flood Plain Special Study.

Hamon pointed out that the two studies are "significantly different," but said each will add needed information and provide guidelines for better management of water resources in the Missouri River Basin. "Both are supported by all states involved, and timely completion in FY '82 is expected," he noted.

The commission also is asking that funds for a level B study of the Lower Missouri Subbasin be included in the FY '82 budget. The two-year study will provide a comprehensive plan for integration of water quality and quantity management in the Lower Missouri Subbasin.

Comments sought on N.D. gasification project report

The U.S. Water Resources Council is seeking comments on a report addressing water resources implications of the Great Plains Gasification Associates Project in Mercer County, N.D. The report was prepared for WRC under the direction of the Missouri River Basin Commission, and was published in the Federal Register Aug. 4.

The project is a coal gasification plant located about 65 miles northwest of Bismarck and about 6 miles south of Lake Sakakawea (formed by Garrison Dam on the Missouri River). The plant will use coal from a 19.5-square-mile coal field nearby.

The report was prepared to comply with section 13(c) of the Federal Nonnuclear Energy Research and Development Act of 1974.

Among findings:

- Present and projected water supplies are more than adequate to meet the water needs of the gasification plant and an adjacent electrical generating plant. Water will be supplied by a diversion from Lake Sakakawea.
- Mining will destroy shallow ground water aquifers under the coal field.
- The quality of Missouri River water will not be affected, although ash disposal in mine pits will deteriorate ground water quality in some adjacent areas.
- Rural domestic and stock wells next to reclaimed mine areas may deteriorate. They will be monitored, and if conditions become unsafe, the project developer will develop replacement water supplies.

For copies of the report, see the Federal Register, Aug. 4, 1980, or contact the U.S. Water Resources Council, 2120 L Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037. (Telephone (202) 254-8290.)

The comment period ends Nov. 3, 1980.

WRC seeks title III applications

The governors of all 50 states will be receiving letters from the U.S. Water Resources Council in October inviting state applications for FY '81 water resources planning grants under title III of the Water Resources Planning Act of 1965.

At the same time, WRC also will be sending application guidelines to designated agencies in each state. States will have 90 days from the date the governor receives the letter in which to complete and return applications.

Procedures for applying have changed since last year, according to WRC staff. WRC state program coordinators will hold regional meetings to explain the new procedures and review the criteria that will be used to evaluate applications.

WRC Region 4 State Programs Manager C. K. Arora said the meetings are especially intended to help individuals directly responsible for writing the applications.

Less title III money for basin states likely in FY '81

The water resources appropriations bill signed by President Carter Oct. 1 maintains slightly less than the status quo for title III state water planning grants in FY '81 — approximately \$10 million. However, a new Water Resources Council formula for awarding individual state grants is likely to decrease title III dollars flowing to Missouri River Basin States.

The formula used by WRC to determine title III grants for FY '80 was based 30 percent on population, land area, and per capita income, and 70 percent on the "need" demonstrated by individual states in applying for the funds. Missouri River Basin states received a total of \$1.9 million of the \$9.6 million awarded in FY '80.

While the title III appropriations amount exceeds the total granted in FY '80, WRC administration costs taken off the top will leave \$9.1 million for FY '81 distribution. This fact, and the impact of the new formula for figuring grant awards, are brought home in preliminary WRC figures which suggest basin states could receive about \$350,000 less in FY '81. (See table, this page.)

The new distribution formula includes a provision for 10 percent of title III monies to be distributed equally among the 50 states (\$16,363 per state). Another 30 percent of available funds will be distributed to states according to population, 20 percent by land area, and 13.3 percent based inversely on per capita income. That leaves 26.7 percent, or about \$2.4 million, to be awarded on the basis of "need."

The approximate amounts for each state based on equal distribution, population, land area and per capita income have already been figured by WRC staff. The "need" figure for each state will be determined by the council after states have submitted applications.

Tentative figures cited by C. K. Arora, manager of state programs for WRC region 4, show that if all 50 states were to demonstrate equal need, the total of title III funds to Missouri River Basin states for FY '81 would drop to less than \$1.6 million.

Arora stressed that these preliminary figures "will go up and down," once applications have been reviewed. Even so, basin states would each have to receive about \$78,000 based on need to maintain the total received in FY '80.

Arora said the council will determine need "based upon the complete program the state has, how they intend to use the title III funds, how the title III funds will help you meet state planning objectives."

The new formula evolved out of guidelines proposed by the WRC's State Ad Hoc Advisory Group earlier this year. Deputy Director of State Programs Denzel Fisher said changes respond to criticism that need was overemphasized under the old formula.

Fisher said the new provision for a base amount distributed equally among states is also a response to state input. The new formula attempts to distribute funds more fairly, Fisher said.

States with big populations and big land areas are likely to gain additional funds, he said. New England states are likely to lose in total funds because they are smaller geographically, and have smaller populations, Fisher said. Among Midwestern states "about half will be gaining, half will be losing," he predicted.

Title III monies to Missouri River Basin States

State	FY '80 Grants	FY '81 Preliminary Grant Projections*
Colorado	\$ 223,000	\$ 172,618
Iowa	154,600	149,224
Kansas	187,400	156,948
Minnesota	222,500	179,909
Missouri	212,000	184,144
Montana	227,600	176,085
Nebraska	207,800	144,789
North Dakota	174,200	130,179
South Dakota	171,000	135,252
Wyoming	136,500	138,577
Total	\$1,916,000	\$1,567,725

*These figures are tentative, but illustrate the potential impact of the new formula WRC is using to compute title III grants in FY '81. The amounts assume equal need among all 50 states. Actual grants to each state will vary according to the final assessment of individual need based on state applications. (See article, this page.)

High Plains brochure available

The six states and two federal agencies cooperating on the High Plains Ogallala Aquifer Regional Study have issued a brochure explaining the study.

Participating agencies are Colorado Department of Natural Resources, Kansas Water Resources Board, Nebraska Natural Resources Commission, New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission, Oklahoma Water Resources Board, Texas Department of Water Resources, U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Southwestern Division.

Copies of the brochure are available from these agencies.

Coal/energy workshops cope with 'growing pains'

The Missouri River Basin Commission and the U.S. Geological Survey Resource and Land Investigations Program sponsored four workshops over the summer to help local people and state officials cope with the problems posed by sudden, energy-related growth. The sessions were entitled "Mitigating the Impacts of Western Coal/Energy Development," and were offered as the second part of the Western Coal Planning Assistance Project.

The workshops drew 269 people from places like Beulah, Williston, and Dunn Center, N.D.; Colstrip and Rock Springs, Wyo.; Pierre and Edgemont, S.D.; Craig and Greeley, Colo., and other towns in the Missouri River Basin. Nineteen participants came from non-basin states. Most came from towns where energy development — particularly coal mining — is causing things to change.

There were community and regional planners, mayors, ministers, county commissioners, school superintendents, county zoning officials and other local leaders. There were employees of firms with a financial interest in energy development — railroads, power companies and mining companies. Still others were state and federal officials.

Frank Onufrey, a health planner for the city of Williston, N.D., voiced the sentiments of many local officials. "I wish more of us (from Williston) could have attended," he said. He is seeking to have a similar workshop held in Williston, but funds have not yet been obtained.



From left, Art Greenberg, director of the Western Coal Planning Assistance Project, Billings, Mont.; E. Tim Smith, acting director of the Resource and Land Investigations Project, Reston, Va.; and Roger Zanarini, director of real estate research and planning for Upland Industries, Omaha, Neb.; examine the real estate board during a workshop game simulating 10 years of energy-induced development in and around fictional "Hassig Junction."

The workshops were designed with communities like Williston in mind. Williston (regional population 29,992 in 1970) has been experiencing severe housing shortages, overcrowding in school facilities, health problems and other strains on community services since exploratory oil drilling was first begun there in the 1950's.

People there know what is meant by "energy development impact." Even so, Onufrey said those who attended the workshop were "exposed to areas we seldom thought about."

"We had to work fast and furious to use all the information available to us," he said. The two-and-a-half-day workshop was built around a case study of a hypothetical community — Hassig Junction in Bittersweet County, Anywhere — where a strip mine and a power plant were being developed.

For two days participants reviewed the available information about the area. They identified problems and issues, collected physical and fiscal data, heard lectures on methods for predicting the impacts of development and met in local government caucuses. In the caucuses, some represented Hassig Junction, some represented Bittersweet County, and others represented an unincorporated town nearby, Fred's Corner. By sharing and dividing the tasks among themselves, participants used reference materials, their personal experience, and planning methods to answer some of the questions they had raised.

Finally, on the third day, they were asked to use the information and the plans that they had compiled as the basis of an elaborate role-playing game. Each participant was asked to assume a role with responsibility for carrying out some of the plans over a 10-year period — a period that went by in less than three hours.

After casting the players, negotiations began. Schedules were set up, broken and reestablished, and everyone affected some part of the outcome.

Most of the principal players were predictable. They included the governor, the mayor of Hassig Junction, the local banker, the presidents of the mining and railroad companies, the chairman of the board of the power company, various other state and local officials including those responsible for water permits and road maintenance; leaders of civic organizations, environmental leaders, and the news media.

There were also "low profile" roles, people whose impact was not necessarily as public or as vocal, but was felt nonetheless. These included real estate developers, transient workers, absentee landlords, and an occasional scoundrel posing as a friend and neighbor.

Most participants agreed that the simulation was very close to real life. Sudden changes in land ownership, population, regulations, or financing forced them to make decisions based on limited and sometimes erroneous information.



Participants in the workshop on Mitigating the Impacts of Coal/Energy Development in the Western States cluster around the banker in a game simulating conditions in "Hassig Junction" after a coal mine opens up outside of town. The banker, seated right, is Renwick Deville, Louisiana Geological Survey; clockwise from his left are: Michael E. M. Richmond, Metropolitan Area Planning Agency Citizens Advisory Board, Omaha; Robert Kuzelka, University of Nebraska—Lincoln, Conservation and Survey Division; Rick Sargeant, Kentucky Geological Survey; Linda Sootsman, Mark Twain Regional Planning Commission, Monroe City, Mo.; Wayne Wiley, Metropolitan Area Planning Agency, Omaha; and Cynthia Nadai, Barry Lawson Associates, Boston.

Those who had learned how to use reference sources and planning methods found themselves more satisfied with the decisions they had made early in the game than did those who were forced to make less informed decisions.

Like real circumstances, there were "people trying to make a fast buck as well as people trying to give personal opinions instead of professional judgments," Onufrey noted.

Workshop sponsors said there were four purposes to the case study exercises, and more than two-thirds of those who filled out evaluation forms felt they had been successfully met. The case studies were intended to allow participants to: (1) become involved in a hypothetical situation similar to the one they face daily; (2) apply information given in lectures; (3) share personal experiences in coping with the impacts of energy development; and (4) learn a process for preparing for the impacts of energy development.

In addition to Bismarck, N.D., workshops were held in Jackson Hole, Wyo., Billings, Mont., and Omaha, Neb.

The Western Coal Planning Assistance Project is drawing to a close, and the final report on the workshops is now being drafted. However, officials are hopeful that the materials generated early in the program — the Western Coal Planning Reference System — will continue to be used by people who want to think ahead and who must stay abreast of the changes that are being forced upon them by energy development in the West.

Tribal observers, others named to MRBC

The 34th meeting of the Missouri River Basin Commission will be an historic occasion as the commission welcomes the first official representatives of basin Indian tribes. In addition, the Department of Agriculture will be represented by a new commission member and alternate.

Bill Youpee, chairman of the Montana Intertribal Policy Board, and Austin Gillette, chairman of the Aberdeen (S.D.) Area Office Tribal Chairmen's Association, have been designated to jointly participate as the official tribal observer. Both will attend quarterly meetings and will alternate sitting at the meeting table.

The Aberdeen Area Office Tribal Chairmen's Association represents the tribes of the states of North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska. Gillette is also tribal chairman of the United Tribes of North Dakota of the Fort Benthold Reservation. Youpee represents the Fort Peck Reservation on the Montana Intertribal Policy Board, which he chairs.

The commission first elected to extend observer status to the tribes in November of 1978. Action had been stalled on naming individuals to serve until this summer, when Department of the Interior Secretarial Representative R. J. Bruning, Denver region, stepped in to assist in coordinating selection. Through cooperation with area offices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the interior assistant secretary for Indian affairs, Youpee and Gillette were named at a meeting of tribal representatives in Denver in September.

In other membership changes, the Department of Agriculture has named Albert E. "Gene" Sullivan, state conservationist with the Soil Conservation Service, Lincoln, Neb., to serve as member. Sullivan succeeds Benny Martin who had served since 1976.



Sullivan

Just prior to assuming the Lincoln post in September, Sullivan served for five years as the deputy state conservationist in California. He is a native of Arkansas and holds a bachelor's degree in agricultural engineering from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

Clinton R. Johnson, assistant state conservationist with SCS in Lincoln, succeeds Robert Kluth as agriculture alternate to the commission. Both Martin and Kluth are now with SCS in Washington, D.C.

WRC staff change noted

Richard N. Vannoy, formerly U.S. Water Resources Council assistant director for operations, has been named acting deputy director. Vannoy has served in various WRC positions since 1970, and has prior experience with the Federal Energy Administration, the Peace Corps, and the State Department.

Peterson heads comprehensive planning group

"Are we going to meet the demands on the water resource in this basin in the future?"

That is a "to be or not to be" question for the people who live in the Missouri River basin, and the best answer lies in comprehensive planning, according to David K. Peterson.

Peterson became MRBC director of comprehensive planning in August. His first assignment is to lead an internal review of the commission's planning process, including the regional plan, data collection and analysis activities, decision documents such as subregional analyses or level B study reports, and the annual priorities process.



Peterson

The review will be "the major task of the next two or three months," he said. The final report is likely to include both comments on existing aspects of the process, as well as suggestions for improving the process and implementation activities — public information and public involvement programs, for example.

"We feel it is very important to examine the planning process again," Peterson said. "Not only because it was mandated by the adoption of the original process by the commission in 1976, but because of the number of changes in commission policies, changes in the principles and standards of the Water Resources Council, and partly because we have started doing environmental impact statements."

Assuming responsibility for comprehensive planning in the 10-state basin is "quite a new experience" for Peterson. He was previously executive director of the North Central Regional Planning Commission, Beloit, Kans., for six years. He has also held community and regional planning positions with the University of Nebraska—Lincoln; Northern Natural Gas Company, Omaha; the Metropolitan Planning Agency, Omaha; and other agencies.

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The Missouri River Basin Commission is a state-federal body charged with coordination, planning and communication for water and related land resources in the 10-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, Energy, Health and Human Services, 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 and the basin's Indian tribes are represented by an observer.

Dr. Millard W. Hall, Chairman; Warren R. "Bob" Neufeld, South Dakota, Vice Chairman

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