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MRB governors adopt 6 resolutions

Missouri River Basin governors adopted six resolutions at their fourth annual conference May 1 at the Crown Center in Kansas City, Mo.

The 1979 Missouri River Basin Governors' Conference was held in conjunction with the 28th regular quarterly meeting of the Missouri River Basin Commission.

Governors who attended were Joseph Teasdale, Missouri, host and conference chairman; Robert Ray, Iowa; John Carlin, Kansas; Thomas Judge, Montana; Arthur Link, North Dakota; Charles Thone, Nebraska; and William Janklow, South Dakota.

The resolutions 1) support development of a uniform flood plain management program, 2) support funding of the Missouri River Basin Hydrology Study, 3) oppose the President's proposed water project cost-sharing legislation, 4) support continuation of USDA Resource Conservation and Development and Snow Survey Programs, 5) support increased federal financial assistance in state water planning, and 6) request the High Plains Council to report on water importation studies associated with the High Plains Ogallala Aquifer Study.

(continued next page)



Seven governors attend conference

Seven governors attended the 4th Annual Missouri River Basin Governors' Conference May 1 at the Crown Center Hotel in Kansas City, Mo. From the left are Govs. John Carlin, Kansas; Robert Ray, Iowa; Thomas Judge, Montana; Joseph Teasdale, Missouri, host and conference chairman; Arthur Link, North Dakota; William Janklow, South Dakota; and Charles Thone, Nebraska.



MRB governors adopt 6 resolutions (continued)

Flood plain management

The resolution on development of a uniform flood plain management program supported the Missouri River Basin Commission in its efforts "to advance and evolve policy guidelines and other resource materials for compatible and uniform flood plain management among the basin states."

The resolution, which received unanimous approval, also supported the Missouri River Flood Plain Management Study proposed by the commission and called for the U.S. Water Resources Council, the Office of Management and the Budget, the President and the Congress to approve funding for the study.

Hydrology study

A second resolution which received unanimous approval supported congressional funding of the Missouri River Basin Hydrology Study to be conducted by the Missouri River Basin Commission beginning in fiscal year 1980.

The purpose of the hydrology study will be to develop a cooperative water data system adequate for assessing the current and future water uses in the 10-state Missouri River Basin. A computerized system would allow states easy access to the data.

Cost-sharing legislation

The governors voiced opposition to the President's proposed water project cost-sharing legislation through a resolution passed by majority vote. (Governor Teasdale abstained from voting.)

The governors said they were willing to continue sharing in the cost of certain projects where the cost-sharing was justified. But the governors went on to say they could "find little support or rationale for the cost-sharing legislation as proposed." (See story elsewhere.)

USDA programs

The governors unanimously favored a resolution calling for the continuation of Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) and the Snow Survey Programs of the Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service.

The resolution stated that the governors "do hereby support the continuation of these critical conservation programs within the U.S. Department of Agriculture at funding levels recommended by the National Association of Conservation Districts at its 33rd annual convention Feb. 11-14."

State planning assistance

The governors were unanimous also in their support of the President's intentions to seek an increase in the funding of state water management planning and water conservation technical assistance administered by the U.S.

Water Resources Council under title II of the Water Resources Planning Act of 1965 (P.L. 89-80).

Congress presently is considering amendments to the 1965 act.

Water importation

A sixth resolution invited the High Plains Council to report at the next governors' conference on water importation studies associated with the High Plains Ogallala Aquifer Study.

The Corps of Engineers has initiated the water importation studies under congressional authorization and in cooperation with the High Plains Council.

Motions

Two motions also were passed by the governors.

One asks that the staff of the Missouri River Basin Commission assist the governors' conference for the purpose of assuring conference program continuity and coordination.

The second motion sets North Dakota as the site for the 1980 Missouri River Basin Governors' Conference. The date will be selected later.



Costle addresses conference

Douglas M. Costle, administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, addresses the May 1 joint luncheon of the 4th Missouri River Basin Governors' Conference and the Missouri River Basin Commission. Costle's thesis was that man's technology, coupled with his numbers on the planet, have brought us to a genuine turning point in history, and that drastic changes are in store for the future. He called upon intellectual resources to point technology in a new direction — "toward a fresh, infinitely more creative mode of invention that keeps human demands in balance with the earth's supply."

Water cost-sharing proposal sent to Congress

Interior Secretary Cecil D. Andrus in May transmitted to the Congress a Carter Administration bill to expand the role of the states in water project decisionmaking and financing.

The proposal was described as a "key element" of President Jimmy Carter's water policy reforms announced June 6, 1978. The Carter water policy is designed to assure that water projects are carefully chosen and better planned.

According to Andrus, "the Administration measure will put states in a position of opportunity and responsibility for meaningful involvement in federal water resource project selection, development and operation.

"The states' cost share will be reasonable and will result in revenues when revenues are produced. It will help ensure that go-ahead decisions on future water projects are made only on those which are most-needed, environmentally sound and worthwhile investments of tax dollars."

In a White House news briefing, Andrus noted that the so-called water projects cost-sharing bill is the first comprehensive measure actually submitted to Congress although water project financing reforms have been recommended for decades by various national water policy study groups.

Saying states are inadequately involved in setting project priorities, Andrus pointed out that states are primarily responsible for water allocation and use. The Carter Administration bill "would involve states in helping decide which projects to build in a time of rising costs and shrinking budgets," Andrus said.

The proposed bill would apply to projects constructed by the Bureau of Reclamation, the Corps of Engineers, Soil Conservation Service and the Tennessee Valley Authority. While the measure won't affect already authorized projects, states which volunteer to share costs for already authorized projects would obtain expedited funding consideration.

States would be required to commit at the front-end of project development 10 percent of project costs attributable to vendible outputs. These are returns from the sale of power or water.

However, states would be responsible for only 5 percent of the project costs attributable to non-vendible outputs, such as flood control, navigation, and fish and wildlife protection.

"The measure would impose a 'cap' on a state's contribution of one-fourth of 1 percent of its general

revenues per project per year, protecting small states against a prohibitive obligation," Andrus pointed out.

In addition to contributing to project costs, states would receive a 10 percent share of revenues derived from sales of water and power.

In cases where more than one state would benefit from a project, the host state would serve as agent and obtain cost contributions from other benefiting states.

The proposed bill also would standardize cost-sharing for localities in the construction of flood protection projects. Currently, localities are responsible for 20 percent of the cost of non-structural flood control projects and anywhere up to 50 percent of structural project costs. The legislation would equalize cost sharing for all local flood control projects at 20 percent. This would eliminate a bias toward structural flood control solutions prompted by the possibility of the federal government assuming a greater share of the project cost.

Report on Yellowstone study transmitted to Washington

A report recommending \$1.2 billion worth of water resources projects and programs in North Dakota, Wyoming and Montana was transmitted by the Missouri River Basin Commission to the U.S. Water Resources Council earlier this year.

The report and its accompanying environmental assessment are for the Yellowstone River Basin and Adjacent Coal Area Level B Study, completed by the commission in 1978.

The study covered approximately 123,000 square miles in southeastern Montana, northern Wyoming and southwestern North Dakota.

The study was funded jointly by the federal government through the U.S. Water Resources Council and by the three states in which the study was conducted. Those states also participated in the study.

The total cost for the plan's recommended projects and programs would be borne about 30 percent by federal sources and 70 percent by non-federal sources, based on prevailing practices. Excluded from these costs are private coal industry investments estimated to exceed \$6 billion.

The projects and programs recommended in the report are subject to the satisfactory completion of preconstruction studies by the appropriate agency.

MRBC Chairman Millard W. Hall transmitted the report to the U.S. Water Resources Council saying, "The plan will provide needed guidance for a balanced program of water management in the study area as part of the Missouri River Basin Comprehensive Plan."

Chairman Hall testifies

Millard W. Hall, chairman of the Missouri River Basin Commission, testified June 12 in support of continued and expanded authorizations for the U.S. Water Resources Council, river basin commissions and state water planning grants.

Hall's testimony was before the Subcommittee on Water Resources of the House Public Works and Transportation Committee, chaired by Ray Roberts (D-Texas).



Hall

The subcommittee was considering H.R. 2610, amendments to the Water Resources Planning Act of 1965 (P.L. 89-80).

Hall testified that the Water Resources Planning Act recognized "the need for a mechanism whereby the many federal and state interests could be considered together and resolved into decisions acceptable to all concerned."

Hall said that while he sees deficiencies in those institutions, "they are, at heart, sound institutions with critically important functions and are capable, given sufficient authority and resources, of dealing with the problems that led to their creation."

Hall also spoke in favor of the original version of H.R. 2610, which contained authorization for \$50 million annually for assistance to state water planning and conservation work. That amount subsequently was trimmed to \$21 million by the Subcommittee on Water and Power Resources of the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee.

"I suggest the original \$50 million should be restored," Hall said. "I can think of nothing that would be more helpful to the long-term water needs of this nation than guaranteeing, in this way, that the states have the capability to plan effectively for the management of their water."

MRBC adopts flood plain management policy statement

The state-federal Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC) has adopted a flood plain management policy statement for the Missouri River between Sioux City, Iowa, and the mouth of the river near St. Louis, Mo.

MRBC Chairman Millard W. Hall said the purpose of the policy statement is to promote a unified approach to flood plain management among the five states along that stretch of the river--South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri.

"The demand for land on the flood plain for power plants, industrial complexes, intensified farming, transportation, commerce, housing, levees and other types of development is increasing," Hall said. "Without sound flood plain management, this trend will cause increased loss of life and damage to property."

The MRBC flood plain management policy statement has four objectives:

- Guiding the utilization of land, water and other resources of the flood plain consistent with land capability, hazard mitigation and local, state, federal and basin planning;
- Avoiding the direct or indirect support of hazardous or nuisance flood plain uses which threaten life, safety and property;
- Encouraging communication and coordination among governmental jurisdictions engaged in flood plain management; and
- Promoting public awareness and responsibility in dealing with hazards associated with flooding and alternative strategies of coping with it.

The policy statement was adopted by the Missouri River Basin Commission at its 28th regular quarterly meeting May 1-2 in Kansas City, Mo. The commission meeting followed the 4th Annual Missouri River Basin Governors' Conference.

Martin releases third progress report on Carter water policy

The third in a series of progress reports on implementation of President Carter's water policy initiatives was made public in May by Assistant Secretary of the Interior Guy R. Martin.

The report outlines progress by 19 interagency task forces created to effect the President's policy. It also analyzes public comments on the policy made at four March regional workshops, including one held in Omaha March 21.

Martin reported that roughly half of the task forces have completed preliminary reports. A second group is drafting legislation for introduction in Congress. The remaining task forces are drafting preliminary reports which contain regulations, guidelines and suggestions for new legislation. All preliminary reports are scheduled for public review by August.

Further regional workshops will be held this summer to discuss reports on:

- Compliance with federal environmental statutes
- Ground water supply
- Instream flows
- Federal reserved water rights
- Indian reserved water rights
- Conservation pricing of water supplied by federal projects

Dates, times and locations of the workshops will be announced shortly.

Copies of the progress report can be obtained from the Water Policy Implementation Group, Room 4356, Department of the Interior, Main Building, Washington, DC 20240. Phone (202) 343-8058

MRBC to meet in Canada

The 29th regular quarterly meeting of the state-federal Missouri River Basin Commission will be held Aug. 1-2 in Calgary, Alta., at the invitation of the Canadian observer to the commission.

Tributaries of the Missouri River drain an area of about 9,700 square miles in Canada. The Missouri River Basin itself does not cross the International Boundary.

N. H. James, director general, Inland Water Directorate, Environment Canada, will address a dinner meeting Wednesday, Aug. 1, on "Water Planning and Management: The Canadian and the Canada-U.S. Scene."

MRBC Chairman Millard W. Hall will respond.

The morning session Thursday, Aug. 2, will be devoted to presentations by Alberta and Saskatchewan on provincial water issues.

Regular business of the commission will be conducted Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. Included will be a report by the Army Corps of Engineers on its management plan for the lower Missouri River.

Hamon named MRBC staff director

Carroll M. Hamon has been named Missouri River Basin Commission staff director by Millard W. Hall, MRBC chairman.

Hamon's appointment and other changes were instituted after the departure of Richard E. Brown, former executive secretary/director of administration.

Hamon previously was director of planning, and both he and Brown reported directly to the chairman.

Directors of the four functional programs of the commission now report to Hamon. They are Bill Hutchinson, director of comprehensive planning; Jerry Zimmerman, director of special studies; Don Ohnstad, director of hydrologic studies; and Bill Ramige, director of administration and public affairs. Ramige previously was information officer reporting to Brown.

"The commission always has had a very capable staff. I believe that this reorganization will best enable the commission to utilize its present personnel," Hall said.

Brabham promoted to director

William C. Brabham, Iowa's member on the Missouri River Basin Commission and a former MRBC vice chairman, has been named director of the Iowa State Conservation Commission.

Brabham, who had been deputy director, replaces Fred Priewert, who resigned to take a position with Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

S.D. Governor appoints Neufeld

Warren R. (Bob) Neufeld has been appointed by Gov. William Janklow as South Dakota's representative to the Missouri River Basin Commission.

Neufeld is secretary of South Dakota's Department of Natural Resources Development.

Delvin D. Brosz, director of the Division of Water Development in the Department of Natural Resources Development is South Dakota's new alternate commissioner.

The Department of Natural Resources Development will undergo a name change July 1, when it will become the S.D. Department of Water and Natural Resources.

Annual Report published

The Missouri River Basin Commission 1979 Annual Report has been published and is available to the public at no charge.

The 18-page report highlights planning and coordination activities of the fiscal year which ended Sept. 30.

Missouri River navigation increases

Commercial navigation tonnage so far this year on the Missouri River is 27 percent greater than it was last year for the same period.

If this trend continues, 1979 will be a record year for shipping, according to Col. C. A. Selleck, Jr., head of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Missouri River Division.

Flows from the Missouri River main stem dams were above normal in May and this provided excellent river depths for both navigators and recreationists on the river.

System storage at the end of May was 66.8 million acre-feet. Storage in the reservoir system is at record levels for this time of year, and a continuation of higher than normal releases will be necessary for the rest of the year to evacuate the flood storage zone by next spring, the corps reported.

Commission seeks hydrologist, information specialist

The Missouri River Basin Commission is looking for a hydrologist and an information specialist.

The hydrologist position is a position authorized but not filled previously. Its immediate need is the result of a pending basinwide hydrology study to be conducted by the commission beginning in fiscal year 1980.

The hydrologist also will assist in the conduct of hydrologic studies associated with other commission planning activities.

The position of information specialist was created through promotion and the reorganization of staff. (See story elsewhere).

The information specialist will assist in public information and involvement programs of the commission.

For additional information, write the Missouri River Basin Commission, Suite 403, 10050 Regency Circle, Omaha, NE 68114.



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

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