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14th meeting plans set

Definition of the comprehensive, coordinated joint plan (CCJP) for the Missouri River Basin will be among topics discussed at the 14th regular quarterly meeting of the Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC) in Omaha Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 5-6.

The meeting will be held at the New Tower Hotel Courts beginning with a luncheon at noon Wednesday followed by business sessions Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning.

The following CCJP definition will be recommended by the Policy Committee:

"The comprehensive, coordinated joint plan (CCJP) is the recommended plan adopted by the MRBC, which serves currently as a basis or guide for the conservation, utilization, development and management of the water and related land resources in all and parts of the Missouri River Basin.

"The CCJP is described in one or more documents that have been approved by the MRBC identifying those structural and nonstructural projects, programs, as well as other measures designed and recommended to enhance the economic, environmental and social conditions of the basin and parts thereof.

"The CCJP provides recommendations on water and related land resources that incorporate the results of federal, state, interstate, local and nongovernmental planning (level A, B, C and others).

"The CCJP is developed through a continuous and dynamic procedure and is evolved in stages."

Grizzly added



The grizzly bear is the latest to be added by the Secretary of the Interior to the list of endangered or threatened species in the Missouri River Basin. Other resident species are the northern Rocky Mountain wolf, black-footed ferret, greenback cutthroat trout and Indiana bat. Migratory species are the whooping crane, southern bald eagle, and Arctic and American peregrine falcons.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-205) directs all federal departments and agencies to insure that actions authorized, carried out or funded by them do not jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or modification of habitat which is determined to be critical to these species.

It was decided by the committee, which met Sept. 8 under the chairmanship of MRBC Vice-Chairman Keith Krause of Kansas, that further work by MRBC staff on "administrative procedures" is necessary before the contents of the CCJP can be fully described.

At the request of state members, the agenda will include a discussion of the coordination of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 208 planning activities in the Missouri River Basin. MRBC state members, state water quality control agency representatives and EPA officials will take part in the special forum.

Other business at the 14th meeting will include discussion of a motion tabled at the previous meeting to appoint a committee to look into alternative uses of water from the main stem reservoirs including marketing and pricing policies. The commission also will be asked to approve the fiscal year 1975 annual report and audit.

MRBC initiates 90-day review of Platte study report

The Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC) Sept. 15 initiated a 90-day state and federal review of the draft report of the Platte River Basin, Nebraska, Level B Study.

The report contains a basin plan for future water use and management in the Platte River Basin in Nebraska, focusing on the period 10 to 25 years in the future. In the plan are more than 100 structural and nonstructural elements requiring many different actions by various state, federal and local governments and organizations.

It is estimated that the construction cost of the structural elements and the capitalized cost of the nonstructural elements for which cost estimates could be completed will total approximately \$530 million based on 1974 costs.

As prescribed by the Water Resources Planning Act of 1965, the draft plan for the Platte River Basin was sent to the secretaries and administrators of the 10 federal agencies which are members of MRBC as well as to the governors of the 10 member states and the heads of 2 member interstate compact agencies.

The states are Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming.

The federal agencies are the Departments of Agriculture; the Army; Commerce; Health, Education and Welfare; Housing and Urban Development; the Interior; and Transportation; the Energy Research and Development Administration; the Federal Power Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency.

The interstate compact agencies are the Big Blue River Compact Administration and the Yellowstone River Compact Commission.

In accordance with the law, all official views, comments and recommendations submitted by each federal agency, state or compact agency will be sent with the final report to the U.S. Water Resources Council for transmission to the President and by him to the Congress and to the governors and the legislatures of the 10 Missouri Basin states.

MRBC Chairman John W. Neuberger has appointed an ad hoc committee headed by a representative of the State of Nebraska to consider the comments and include those appropriate in the final report. Other members of the committee are representatives of Colorado, Wyoming and the Departments of Agriculture, the Army and the Interior.

Highlights of the recommended plan will be presented at the 14th quarterly MRBC meeting Nov. 5-6 in Omaha by Carroll Hamon, staff coordinator for the MRBC ad hoc committee.

Problem identification report published

The Missouri River Basin Commission has published an 86-page report titled "Water and Related Land Resources Problems in the Missouri River Basin."

The problem identification was the first activity completed in the Missouri River Basin portion of the 1975 National Assessment of Water and Related Land Resources being conducted by the U.S. Water Resources Council.

The MRBC publication outlines 57 tentative analytical areas which group problems using appropriate hydrologic and political boundaries. The areas are shown on three foldout maps which accompany the report.



Bill Hutchinson (left) and Alan Hersch (right) examine information submitted for the MRBC publication "Water and Related Land Resources Problems in the Missouri River Basin."

Assistant Regional Study Director Bill Hutchinson said more than 150 local, state, regional and federal agencies assisted in gathering the information throughout an area that spans 414 counties in 10 Missouri River Basin states.

"The next step will be to systematically evaluate the seriousness of the problems that have been identified," Hutchinson said. "The process will eventually lead to recommendations for studies aimed at solving those problems in the order of their priority."

"Meantime, the problem identification document will serve as common basis of understanding between state and federal officials and assist in the coordination of planning for water and related land resources in the Missouri River Basin."

Copies of the publication have been distributed to MRBC members and alternates.

WRC, ICWP to hold joint sessions at annual meeting

Warren D. Fairchild, director of the U.S. Water Resources Council (WRC), and Jack W. Pepper, chairman of the Interstate Conference on Water Problems (ICWP), have announced that ICWP and WRC will participate jointly during part of ICWP's annual meeting at the Showboat Hotel in Las Vegas Oct. 13-15.

"The joint sessions are planned to allow maximum opportunity for constructive interchange of ideas and views between state and federal officials whose responsibilities include management of our nation's water resources," a WRC news release said. "The agenda will provide ample opportunity for full discussion of such topics as planning coordination, permits for work in navigable waters, water-for-energy, water data coordination and water rights."

The Senate Interior Subcommittee on Energy Research and Water Resources will conduct a field hearing on the Water Resources Planning Act (P.L. 89-80) at the same location Oct. 16.

The subcommittee is seeking suggestions and recommendations for possible changes in the current legislation or recommendations for elements of new legislation to improve the effectiveness of water resources planning on both state and federal levels.

\$11 million, 5-year investigation planned for Madison Formation

A five-year investigation expected to cost \$11 million is planned for gathering data on Madison Formation ground water underlying large parts of four states in the Missouri River Basin.

The states affected are Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota.

The effort, for which a plan of study (POS) is being drafted by the U.S. Geological Survey in Denver, was initiated after coal companies expressed interest in withdrawing large amounts of water for slurry pipelines and other coal-related projects.

The POS was funded by the Old West Regional Commission at a cost of \$170,000, according to Ken Blackburn, program supervisor for Old West in Billings, Mont.

Congress will be asked to fund the investigation. The amount sought for the first year will range from \$1 million to \$2.3 million, Blackburn said.

Hugh Hudson, USGS staff hydrologist, said test drilling will be the most expensive element of the investigation. He said a single test hole near the center of the formation where geothermal potential exists will cost as much as \$2.5 million.

Hudson said the most significant product of the POS has been a mathematical simulation model that can be stressed to show what will happen to Madison water as the result of various levels of water use for coal development.

"The digital model can compress 100 years of pumping into seconds on the computer," Hudson said. He said the model will be used to show what kind of data will be required by test drilling.

Hudson said the draft POS is expected Oct. 31. Copies of the final POS will be available after Dec. 1.

Elliot Cushing of USGS has been designated study coordinator. His address is Water Resources Division, U.S. Geological Survey, Building 53, Box 25046, Denver Federal Center, Lakewood, CO 80225.

EDITORIAL

WRC national planning strategy builds on commissions and states

By John W. Neuberger, MRBC chairman

U.S. Water Resources Council (WRC) efforts to evolve a national planning strategy (NPS) are tied directly to a key and required component -- regional comprehensive, coordinated joint plans (CCJP's).

To fulfill its role, the Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC) has requested for the first time in fiscal year 1977 a CCJP budget to conduct studies and programs identified through the MRBC priority listing process. Completion of such priority studies and related basin coordination, framework updating and regional assessment activities will significantly contribute to accelerated development of the Missouri River Basin's CCJP.

The proposed national planning strategy would integrate statewide planning, regional or basin planning and federal water and related land planning into a coordinated whole. One objective of an NPS is a more meaningful method of allocating federal fiscal resources for the development, management and conservation of the nation's water and related natural resources.

The strategy is to develop an annual appraisal of programs and priorities recommended in state and regional plans with WRC's continuing national assessment of water requirements and water supply. The key components of the strategy are (1) state plans; (2) regional plans -- CCJP's -- including regional assessments, coordination and program reviews, priorities and special studies and (3) continuing nationwide analyses by WRC.

It's encouraging to note that the three components are complementary to Titles I, II, and III of the Water Resources Planning Act (P.L. 89-80). Also, I'm pleased to see that it's proposed as a national, not a federal, planning strategy.

As further information becomes available on the evolving national planning strategy concept, the Basin Bulletin will keep you informed.

Montana expresses skepticism toward water marketing

Montana is skeptical but willing to move ahead regarding an agreement between secretaries of the Army and the Interior. The agreement is one under which water stored in the six Missouri River main stem reservoirs would be marketed for industrial uses.

Gary J. Wicks, director of Montana's Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, expressed his state's opinion before the Senate Subcommittee on Energy Research and Water Resources of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs which held a hearing in Billings, Mont., Aug. 26.

Wicks said he welcomed "this opportunity to express Montana state government's views on water marketing by the federal government from the main stem reservoirs...because we realize that decisions made now regarding the use of our water may well set an unalterable course for our state for at least the next 50 years."

He said it is the first priority of the State of Montana "to protect and improve, to enhance and expand the agricultural and renewable resource base...."

Wicks said that because of that policy and the substantial amounts of water involved, Montana is interested in state participation in water marketing. He said Montana has been involved in discussions with the federal government and other states in addition to serving as a member of the Missouri River Basin Commission's ad hoc committee which studied the proposal.

"We were at first, and remain, somewhat skeptical," he said. "Notwithstanding this skepticism however, we elected to move ahead in considering the proposal although we were, in some cases, alone in doing so among all the basin states.

"We are interested in maximizing the control Montanans have over our resources to ensure a strong voice in deciding the future direction of our state.

"The proposed marketing arrangement, as expressed by representatives of the federal government in these hearings and elsewhere would, if properly concluded, give Montanans that control and is preferable to years of indecision and lengthy litigation over who owns the water, who has what water rights, etc."

Other basin states and water users testified in Billings as well as at hearings in Rapid City, S.D., and Washington, D.C. Copies of the records of those hearings may be obtained by writing Sen. Frank Church, Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy Research and Water Resources, Room 3206, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510.

Interior releases results of NGPRP

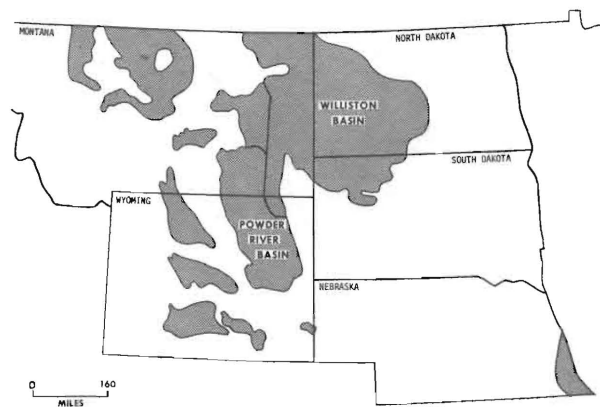
The Department of the Interior has released results of a three-year, interagency study of possible impacts of developing vast coal resources of five Northern Great Plains states. The study is titled "Effects of Coal Development in the Northern Great Plains."

It focuses on 63 counties in Montana, Nebraska, North and South Dakota and Wyoming, and projects the development of their coal resources at theoretical rates over the next 25 years. Possible environmental, economic, social and cultural consequences resulting from low, intermediate and high rates of coal development are estimated over time frames ending in 1980, 1985 and 2000.

The 165-page report, accompanied by supporting documents and maps, will be used along with other data chiefly as an information base by local, state and federal officials in determining coal leasing policies in the five states. The Interior Department, Agriculture Department, Environmental Protection Agency and representatives of the governors of the five states participated in the study, which was developed under a Program Review Board of the Northern Great Plains Resources Program (NGPRP).

Seven work groups were coordinated by Project Manager John VanDerwalker in their investigations of specific factors, including regional geology, mineral resources, water, atmospheric aspects, surface resources, socio-economic aspects and national energy considerations.

The MRBC library in Omaha is one of the repositories for the report. It is anticipated that the report will provide much valuable input to the proposed MRBC Level B study of the Yellowstone River Basin and adjacent coal areas.



COAL RESOURCES IN NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS



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