



SUMMARY

**Lower Platte River Basin Water Management Plan Coalition
Technical Committee Meeting
June 18, 2015, 10:00 to 1:00 P.M.
Offices of Lower Elkhorn NRD
601 E. Benjamin Ave., Suite 101, Norfolk, NE**

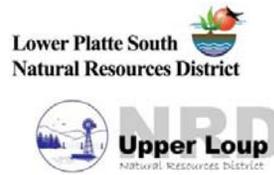
In Attendance: S. Rock (HDR), A. Rupe (JEO), J. Engel (HDR), P. Woodward (PMRNRD), M. Petermann (PMRNRD), D. Wilcox (NARD), R. Wozniak (LENRD), R. Callan (LLNRD), L. Angle (LPNNRD), M. Hart (UENRD), T. Naprstek (LLNRD), T. Freed (NDNR), D. Ehrman (LPSNRD), C. Becker (LENRD), Brian Bruckner (LENRD)

I. **Introductions & Administrative Items**

II. **Recap of June 3, 2015 Management Committee Meeting (handout)**

III. **Basinwide Accounting Concept** - John Engel led the group through a discussion of the Basinwide Accounting to date. PowerPoint highlighted how the methodology would apply to the Elkhorn basin as well as a sample retiming project in the Loup Basin. Discussion items included the following:

- a. **Water supply scenario for allowable additional use.** Discussion included 25YR Average (consistent with INSIGHT), 2002 – 2005 Drought Average, and an alternative to the Instream Flow (80% Streamflow at Louisville)
 - i. PowerPoint over Nebraska Revised Statutes, Section 46-713 and how the law is written regarding Instream Flow Demands. Discussion on how this calculation is performed with regard to accounting for 1993 GWCU demands and how this reduces the Instream Flow Demand applied to the basin.
 - ii. Maximizes basin excess supply because DNR methods result in applying a smaller demand on the basin than the full Instream Flow Demand in the FAB Analysis. Could lead to an artificially inflated “Excess Supply”.
 - iii. Looked at what would happen if limited development to only allowing a 20% reduction in streamflow at Louisville gage. For this alternative, this limitation replaces the Instream Flow demand in the calculations. Explained that this was more conservative and could be used as part of the basin accounting instead of the Instream Flow Demand for Basinwide Plan.
 - iv. Distributed comparison plots of the 3 supply estimate alternatives investigated (25 YR Avg, 2002 – 2005 Drought Avg, and 80% Streamflow at Louisville). Results showed the drought period to be very conservative and the Instream Flow demand alternative to be the least conservative with the 80% Streamflow in-between the other 2 alternatives.
 - v. Results indicate that if Instream Flow Demand is used to determine “Excess Supply”, and that full “Excess Supply” was developed, then streamflow at Louisville could be depleted beyond 20%.



vi. Further Discussion Items included:

- 1) What is the technical basis for choosing one alternative over the other?
- 2) 20% reduction in Streamflow at Louisville is arbitrary. Why not 15% or 30%? Is there a physical basis?
- 3) Desire to err on the conservative side. Don't want to allow development and then turn-around and tell producers to shut off wells or other forms of regulation.
- 4) The Technical Committee proposes for Management Committee to utilize the 20% reduction in Streamflow at Louisville supply estimate alternative (Annual, 25YR AVG) to determine the Supply, Demands, and "Excess" for the Basinwide Accounting, with a check on the Peak Season to make sure new development does not exceed Peak Season supplies. Address drought by utilizing drought management plans.

b. **% of allowable additional use to allow over next 5 years.** Direction from Management Committee was to determine a % of the "Excess Supply" to develop over the next 5 years.

- i. Some members expressed concern that setting a limit on development on each NRD could be tough sell.
- ii. Members of Management Committee in attendance expressed that a recommendation on a reasonable limit is what was proposed and desired by Management Committee for consideration.
- iii. How would transfers be handled in Basin Accounting? What needs to be reported, in what format, and how often? Needs to build into Plan.
- iv. Would water transfers from an upper basin through a lower basin artificially increase Streamflow in the record? Could this lead to an artificially increase in BWS for a lower basin which is just leasing water from an upper basin?

c. **Example project accounting – Sargent Canal on Middle Loup.** John led group through expanded example of Sargent Canal retiming project and how retimed flows to the Peak Season can be used to increase Peak Season Supply.

- i. Discussion on if the % limit on development should include this water created by projects or if this would be available for 100% development on-top of the % "Allowable Use".

IV. **Goals/Objectives/Action Items – refining and detail (adding measurable and timing elements to current goals and objectives).** Adam Rupe led the group through a discussion of SMART/measurable goals and the possible need to incorporate into the existing draft set of Goals & Objectives. Some discussion on which goals this would be appropriate for. Due to time constraints, HDR will work with JEO on incorporating SMART/Measurable goals and distribute to Tech Committee for review.

V. **Anticipated topics to cover at second water banking workshop**

- a. Review the purpose of the Coalition - review of what Coalition is and what it is not.
- b. Review and discuss the goals of water banking



- c. Discuss concept for a common basin accounting method to quantify supplies and demands by basin/ NRD
- d. Discuss estimating the amount of “excess supply” or “allowable future development” by basin/NRD and how water banking activities are accounted for.
 - i. Some concern of using the word “Excess Supply” without further clarification to what this means. Need to be very clear with the Coalition or this may be interpreted as fully available. Not all acres created equal.
 - ii. Some concern of using the term “Allowable Future Development”. Consider changing term to be more reflective of what Basin Accounting is doing. Purpose of determining the “Excess Supply” is to determine that amount of water that may potentially be utilized and still stay out of a “Fully Appropriated” status.
 - iii. Explain better that the % limit is suggested to build in a “factor-of-safety” while testing the Basin Accounting methodology. Could change the period-of-analysis in the 5-year update which could change the “Excess Supply” number. This % provides some conservatism.
 - iv. Need to bring it all back to Fully Appropriated. Purpose of this is to explain where each NRD is with regard to FA status and help them stay out of FA status.
- e. Need to walk Coalition through a full example of how a transfer or project would work within the Basin Accounting.

VI. Action items:

- a. HDR to send Technical Committee summary of Basin Accounting period-of-analysis recommendation.
- b. HDR to work with JEO on incorporating SMART/Measureable goals into existing draft set of Goals & Objectives.
- c. HDR/TFG to send out Water Banking Materials to Tech Committee by July 13th for review of material/semantics.
- d. HDR to send out Draft Plan (Sections 1-3) to group for review prior to August Tech Committee Mtg.
- e. HDR to send out TM on Controls, Excess Flow, and Basin Accounting to group prior to August Tech Committee Mtg.

VII. Next Technical Committee Meeting: HDR to send out Doodle Poll for August 11th through August 14th. Location will be Ord.

VIII. Upcoming Meetings

- a. Management Committee meeting – July 7, 2015 in Kearney, 10:00 to 12:00, exact location TBD
- b. Water banking workshop II – Monday July 20, 2015 at Platte College in Columbus, NE; 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM

IX. Adjourn at 1:00 pm