

# **Integrated Management Plan Stakeholders Meeting**

## **Twin Platte Natural Resources District**

### **January 14, 2008**

**Stakeholders present:** Phil Armstrong, Don Colvin, Burdette Cooley, Mike Drain, Jim Goeke, Tina Kurtz, Frank Kwapnioski, Jim Meismer, Dudley Oltmans, Roric Paulman, Robert Petersen, Page Peterson, Dennis Schilz, Jerry Steinke, Mike Svoboda, Doug Teaford, Steve Van Boening, Joe Wahlgren, T.J. Walker, Jerry Weaver, Robert Wiseman.

**Stakeholders absent (excused):** Marion Kroeker, Kenneth Schilz, Mike Wheeler.

**Stakeholders absent (unexcused):** Lisa Dominisse, Jim Hawks.

**Resource People:** Ann Dimmitt, Kent Miller, Kevin Spelts.

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The Stakeholders Meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. CST.

#### **Announcements and Presentations:**

**Kent Miller** announced that Ron Bishop with CPNRD will be at the February 14 TPNRD Board of Directors meeting to speak about their Water Banking program. Stakeholders are invited to attend. The meeting will be held at 3:00 p.m. at the TPNRD offices located in Tier One Bank, North Platte.

**Dennis Schilz** made a presentation on a proposal from the Western Irrigation District (WID) which diverts water from the South Platte River at the Colorado State line between Big Springs, NE and Julesburg, CO to irrigate approximately 9,000 acres. This district has an 1897 water right which is a part of the 1923 compact with Colorado. WID continues to work to increase flows from Colorado and feels it is important that TPNRD continue to support them in this effort.

The WID is proposing that studies be conducted and data collected to evaluate the benefits to TPNRD of using WID facilities to develop an intentional ground water recharge pilot project. Purposes of such a study would include reducing non-beneficial losses and increasing usable water supply. The study would involve data gathering, impact studies, and project development with results that should be beneficial to both TPNRD and WID. The pilot may also provide helpful information to other irrigation districts. Currently the WID starts pulling water into the canal in April, but until July much of it is lost downstream. Nearly all irrigators in this district also have supplemental wells. If all irrigation was converted to ground water, then surface water rights could be used to keep water in leaky canals or diverted into basins and allowed to seep back into the ground. To implement a scenario like this would require mechanisms to transfer water from one entity to another. The WID asks that Stakeholders recommend that TPNRD fund and carry out the proposed studies, including design, cost, and benefits for a WID Intentional Recharge Project.

Additional information in response to Stakeholder questions: There are other known or proposed conjunctive use projects which increase ground water storage when surface water is available, and use ground water when surface water is not available. The WID seems well suited to test this concept. The infrastructure is already in place and it may be possible to use nearly all the surface water. The risks of doing this are minimal and it may be a way to preserve surface water rights and solidify supplies in the future. Stakeholders asked Dennis to put this proposal in writing for their consideration before any further discussions of whether they would recommend this to TPNRD.

#### **Discussion of IMP Management Scenarios:**

The final management scenario was discussed.

#### **Vegetation Management:**

Vegetation management involves controlling vegetation and maintaining it in a state where it doesn't revegetate with undesirable species. There was some discussion about what authority NRDs have to require vegetation management. They have no statutory authority to regulate vegetation, but they can incent different land or water use.

<b>PROS</b>	<b>CONS</b>
Can incent grazing in riparian zones, and producers gain other benefits from grazing.	Conflicting values and opinions regarding what vegetation to control.
Vegetation control may benefit some wildlife.	Control may be adverse to some wildlife.
This method does not involve turning off water to existing users.	Generally negative public perception about cutting down trees or using chemical in the river – education needed.
Reducing vegetation is positive for some recreational uses of the river.	Reducing vegetation may be negative for some recreational uses of the river.
Eliminating phragmites is a win-win for all.	Costly approach.
This approach adds water to the river.	Impact of herbicide to water and non-target vegetation.
Promotes flood control.	Constant maintenance required – fencing issues.
	Difficult to quantify water savings.
	Scope of problem – millions of acres.
	Requires a regional solution.

**The Next Step:**

Now that all management scenarios have been considered, Stakeholders were asked what they saw as the next step in this process. A question was raised about the timeline for completion of the IMP. The original three year deadline was September 15, 2007. DNR and TPNRD agreed to extend this deadline eight months to May 15, 2008. At that point an IMP needs to be adopted and implemented. Tina shared information about the current status of IMPs in other districts. Most districts have a plan for fully appropriated areas but are waiting on the Basin IMP group to finalize the over appropriated provisions. Tina said that in fully appropriated areas you really only need four things: 1) a moratorium on new wells; 2) a method for transfers; 3) a certification process; and 4) a variance process. TPNRD is already doing most of this. New legislation (1226) further defines municipality’s obligations under this new water legislation. The statutes are quite complex so Tina was asked to make a presentation about this at the February Stakeholders meeting.

Proposed agenda items for February:

- Presentation by Frank Kwapnioski – current conditions and considerations in determining water controls for the future.
- Presentation by Tina – statutes impacting municipality’s water management.
- Discussion and prioritization of management scenarios for various situations (i.e. short term vs. long term solutions, times of abundant precipitation, and drought). The group will also try to address where the burden for correcting this shortage should be – with producers, with all citizens through a financial solution, etc.

To prepare for this meeting, Stakeholders are asked to review the attached summary of all Management Scenarios.

**Meeting Schedule:**

All meeting times are from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. CT and ***will be held at the Holiday Inn Express.***

Future meetings:

February 11  
March 17

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.