

TPNRD 2nd Increment SAC Meeting #2 Minutes

Date: August 14th, 2018 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Location: Holiday Inn Express, 300 Holiday Frontage Rd, North Platte, NE

In Attendance:

Stephanie White, HDR	Keegan Meismer, Producer	Jerry Weaver, TPNRD board
Brian Harmon, NeDNR		
Melissa Mosier, NeDNR	Jim Meismer, TPNRD board	Joe Wahlgren, TPNRD board
Philip Paitz, NeDNR	Mike Wheeler, Irrigation	Roric Paulman, GW users
Jesse Bradley, NeDNR	John Sauer, City of Ogallala	Page Peterson, GW users
Kent Miller, TPNRD		Randy Ray McNitt, business, Plains Equipment
Ann Dimmitt, TPNRD	Adam Kester, NGPC	
Toney Krajewki, County Commissioner	Leland Poppe, Great Western Bank	John Heaston, Aquamart
Daran Rudnick, University of Nebraska	Dave Steffes, Irrigation Districts	

I. Introduction

- i. Stephanie White, Facilitator from HDR, opened the meeting at 7:00 by stating that a copy of the open meetings act was in the room, and that notice of the meeting was published in the Telegraph.

II. COHYST

- i. Bradley presented on the COHYST FAQ. Bradley presented a timeline of development to put the COHYST model into better context. The primary driver of post-97 depletions was 57,000 new acres that were developed after 1997. Each acre general consumes roughly about 1 foot of water. Roric noted that in nearly all the years, the difference was 2 to 3%. Bradley noted that modeled pumping was derived using CROPSIM.

III. Robust Review

- i. **Results.** Bradley presented on the Robust Review results. Acres increased slightly due to change from permanent to temporary retirements. Municipal pumping is at total capacity. The region is still getting about 1,000 acre feet of recharge benefit from 2011 and 2013.
- ii. **PRRIP.** There are three big projects: Tamarack, Pathfinder, and McConaughy. The environmental account in McConaughy is up to 200,000 acre feet.

IV. Current IMP: Dimmitt presented information about the current TPNRD IMP

- i. **Goals.** The goals must meet and achieve FA, must be in compliance, and must be consistent with the Basin-Wide Plan.

- ii. **Non-regulatory Actions.** Non-regulatory actions taken were outreach and education events, incentive-based programs aimed at temporarily or permanently drying up irrigation wells and convert them to non-irrigation.
 - iii. **Regulatory Actions.** Regulatory actions taken were to annually compare depletions to accretions; trigger stair steps that, if not met, could lead to established regulations; and controls such as alternative crops, reduction of acres and allocations.
 - iv. **Monitoring.** Monitoring actions in place are to annually track yearly progress and to certify acres.
 - v. **Lessons Learned.** Roric stated that measuring is imperative.
- V. Roric presented on a proposal to manage water resources in the TPNRD
- VI. Stakeholder comments and questions are outlined below:
- a. The metered data has more impact in higher consumptive years outside of 2012. Can we settle as modeled CU as a benchmark to lower the cost burden on the District by removing/stop checking the meters?
 - i. Do we need the meters going forward?
 - ii. Does the modeled pumping provided a good enough baseline in the model?
 - b. The data can be used to better calibrate the model, but I (Jesse) am not able (not an expert) to make that decision.
 - c. What components do we need to measure and when can we stop?
 - d. How was the actual consumptive use calculated in the model?
 - i. Developed from Dale Martin in the form of CROPSIM, which is deriving the numbers.
 - e. Have you made any changes from siphon tubes to overhead/pivots?
 - i. Just identified by source. Groundwater and surface water.
 - f. Doesn't the Sutherland (Gerald Gentleman Station) well field represent a non-consumptive use?
 - i. We need to do more work on this as the current value seems to be capacity rather than actual use and it may not even be consumptive depending on the changes needed.
 - g. Where do most of the excess flows from 2011 and 2013 come from?
 - i. 2011 is S. Platte and 2013 N. Platte River
 - h. With this year being a wetter year, will we see a change in the results?
 - i. It would have an effect in future results but not the current ones.
 - i. By law (statute), who has to offset M&I?
 - i. Generally, there are certain caps. Above it is treated like an industry and it is up to them to offset it. Below it is the responsibility of the NRD though this may change.
 - j. If a city were to drill 30 wells and never used them (using Sutherland GGS as an example) would that create a use that needs to be offset.
 - i. It shouldn't as we are working only to model actual use and the first increment was set to create a baseline on future M&I growth.
 - ii. Is there an objective (in BWP?) that will affect us (North Platte)?

1. Still being discussed in the BWP and will need further discussion in IMP. Responsibility is currently on the NRD but it may shift to the municipality. City of NP is permitted for 4 million and they are currently only using 2. NP also doesn't allow acres to be transferred outside of the 2 mile zone as the city grows which allows for new municipal use.
- k. Are we gaining anything in terms of delisting endangered species via PRIPP?
 - i. Hard to say. Not an expert but reports are promising. Least Tern population in the area may come off the list but it is a process to remove them. Off channel habitats are gaining more emphasis and those populations are being counted differently than at the start of the program. Mating pairs of Whooping Cranes appear to have increased as well.
 - l. Good presentation but some of it may be falling on deaf ears. The data is good, but doesn't make a lot of sense until you put \$\$ on what those deficits are. Millions of dollars spent to get a third of the way there (1 days' worth of river flow).
 - i. Need more info on the economic impact/connections in order to make better decisions.
 - m. Should more emphasis be placed on phragmites and Russian Olive control? How much do they affect streamflow?
 - i. Not an issue that is going away but there is starting to be control. Needs to be maintained.
 - n. Can we reach our goal without metering?
 - o. It might be time to educate farmers on how to use water – similar to financial education in the 1980's.
 - p. Use of new satellite technology to monitor field health
 - q. How is consumptive use measured?
 - r. Need to get the \$30 million spent by TPNRD out in front of the public.
 - i. Also , people need to be aware of the new depletion numbers.
 - s. From a producer: It is imperative that the money be used in a way that gives the best bang for the buck. What will produce a change in behavior within the district? Will have to have real-time metering to create that change as delayed responses likely won't result in change.