

Kansas Lower Republican Basin Advisory Committee
October 2, 2007
Concordia, Kansas

Meeting Notes

Attendance:

Basin Advisory Committee Members Present

Carl Nuzman (Chair), Arnold Ross (Vice Chair), Larry Shannon, Jim Cobler, Daniel Howell, Charles Johnson, Laura Calwell

Basin Advisory Committee Members Absent

Shane Munsch, Chris Mammoliti, Bill Ramsey, Joel Davidson

Others in Attendance

John Robison (Republic Co. Soil Conservation Board), Rob Unruh (KDWP), Heather O'Hara (Kansas Legislative Research), John Piskac (NRCS), Bobbi Wendt (DWR), Chris Gnau (KWO), Nathan Westrup (KWO), Andy Ensz (KWO), Marty Burke (KWO)

Welcome and Introductions: Chair Carl Nuzman brought the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Committee members, advisors and others present provided self introductions.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Approval of July Meeting Notes: Changes to the draft notes from the July meeting in Manhattan were described. The meeting notes were approved by consensus.

KWA Update: Carl Nuzman provided an update on the August Water Authority meeting in Independence including his election as chair of the BAC chairs. He also related information from the meeting about water supply challenges in various basins, David Pope's appointment as Director of MORAST and the upcoming Reservoir Summit.

Agency Reports: John Piskac (NRCS) reported that his agency is operating under a continuing budget resolution. He discussed EQIP sign-up ahead of the new farm bill and funding for emergency watershed projects in Pottawatomie, Clay and Morris Counties. Rob Unruh (KDWP) reported Lovewell Reservoir was 2 feet below conservation pool and summer park visitation had been good. He added that a research project is underway to study fish loss through the irrigation canal system and that renovation at Jamestown Wildlife Area is in its third year. Responding to a question about Cheyenne Bottoms, Unruh said the pool currently covered 30,000 surface acres and releases were limited to 200 CFS.

Bobbi Wendt (DWR) reported on the lifting of MDS administration in the Republican basin. A written report from Katie Tietsort (DWR) was provided.

BAC Constituency Contact Reports: Marty Burke explained the addition of these reports to the meeting agenda as an opportunity for BAC members to provide information on communications, meetings or important topics related to their category of representation on the BAC. Jim Cobler (Other Public Water Supplier) commented that rural water districts in NE Kansas need to be looking to the future to assure that water shortages do not curtail growth. He said the issue needs to be addressed now as solutions will take time.

Laura Calwell (Recreation) reported on a Friends of the Kaw (FOK) cleanup below Lecompton and an upcoming cleanup on the Missouri and lower Kansas on October 6. She also provided information on a Kansas Trail Summit on October 18 -19, upcoming FOK floats and river safety concerns. Larry Shannon (Water Assurance District) commented that he was initially informed that all upstream lake releases would be stopped during recovery activities for a child lost on the Kansas River near Maple Hill. Although releases were not completely stopped, he voiced concern about how these decisions are made.

Carl Nuzman (At-Large/Public) questioned whether wholesale water rates are adequate to cover actual costs. There was discussion on decoupling the rates per reservoir and where any new revenues would go if rates were increased. Carl asked Larry Shannon to head a sub-committee to look at water marketing rates.

Daniel Howell (Agriculture) reported that the Tuttle Creek WRAPS project is in the modeling phase. Charles Johnson (Municipal Public Water Supplier) said construction had begun on a 100 million gallon capacity ethanol plant adjacent to Concordia and the City had been asked for bonding support. He added that state air permits for the facility had been secured and owners were trying to purchase water rights.

Arnold Ross (Irrigation) asked about a recent meeting in Junction City regarding the interstate compact on the Republican River and reported that Nebraska is allowing irrigation from alluvial wells. He added that Nebraska plans to clear vegetation from the river channel and has issued a moratorium on new wells. Carl Nuzman commented that litigation may be necessary to enforce the compact.

Basin Activities/Update: Chris Gnau (KWO) gave a presentation on water supply and demand in the Kansas River and asked the Committee for comments and questions on the methodology and assumptions used in the analysis. There was general agreement by the Committee that the process was appropriate. There were some questions and discussion of conservation measures, navigation releases and costs associated with raising conservation pool levels.

Marty Burke provided a summary of activities associated with the dredging project on Mission Lake in response to an earlier request from the Committee. He also provided a WRAPS update describing available funding and a summary of fiscal year 08 applications in the basin.

Messages to the Kansas Water Authority: There were no messages to the Kansas Water Authority.

Next BAC Meeting: The KLR BAC will is scheduled to meet on November 29 in Manhattan.

- Carl Nuzman, Larry Shannon and Laura Calwell will attend the Reservoir Summit on Oct. 17.
- Carl Nuzman will attend the Kansas Water Authority meeting November 8-9 in Dodge City.
- Several BAC members plan to attend Bio-Energy conferences in Emporia and Hays.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned by consensus at noon