

MEETING NOTES  
Yellowstone River Compact Commission  
Technical Advisory Committee Spring Meeting  
Conference Call and Go To Meeting  
April 11, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Jodee Pring.

1. Introductions

Those participating on the call introduced themselves to the group. A listing can be found at the end of these minutes.

2. Additions/Revisions to Agenda

For the State of Montana, Chris Smith will be giving the updates on the Yellowstone River Basin Adjudication and the Crow Compact in place of Kim Overcast. In addition, Wayne Berkas asked if the hydrologic update could be moved further down on the agenda as those in the USGS office in MT need to change meeting rooms. The group agreed and the Hydrologic Update was moved after the Reservoir Operations and Storage update.

3. 2013 Runoff forecasts

Brian Domonkos, with the NRCS in Bozeman, MT gave a PowerPoint presentation on the conditions in Montana's portion of the basin and also included some information from Wyoming. Mr. Domonkos' presentation also included some good information on the NRCS moving the period of record from 1971-2000 to 1981-2010 in addition to information on the NRCS moving from mean to median. A copy of his presentation can be found **here - 1**.

Todd Chambers, with the National Weather Service in Billings, MT gave a PowerPoint Presentation on the overall basin and what to expect this coming spring and summer. A copy of his presentation can be found **here - 2**.

4. Reservoir Operations and Storage (MT and WY)

Reservoirs and Rivers of Special Interest (brief reports)

- Bighorn Reservoir Operations – no report
- Buffalo Bill/Boysen Reservoirs – Loren Smith, Superintendent of Water Division III in Wyoming, reported the following:
  - Buffalo Bill Reservoir: the current elevation is 5365.6' and the current capacity is 436,673 acre-feet which is 67.5% full. Current outflow is 212 cfs. Forecasted April – July inflow is 525,000 acre-feet, which is 62% of normal
  - Boysen Reservoir: the current elevation is 4712.6' and the current capacity is 530,410 acre-feet which is 71.5% full. Current outflow is 500 cfs. Forecasted April – July inflow is 350,000 acre-feet, which is 62% of normal.
  - Bull Lake Reservoir: the current elevation is 5778.9' and the current capacity is 78,510 acre-feet which is 51.5% full. Current outflow is 2536 cfs (winter flow). Forecasted April – July inflow is 110,000 acre-feet which is 79% of normal

- Pilot Butte Reservoir: the current elevation is 5452.4' and the current capacity is 27,195 acre-feet which is 80.5% full. Current outflow is 0 cfs.
- Anchor Reservoir: the current capacity is 750 acre-feet. Gates are closed and storing water.
- A copy of Mr. Smith's presentation can be found **here-3**.
- Lake DeSmet - Carmine Loguidice, Superintendent of Water Division II in Wyoming, reported the following:
  - The inflow to Lake DeSmet is 15 cfs and the current capacity is 193,250 acre-feet, which is approximately 91% of average.
  - The Game and Fish have been working on some lease agreements for in-place use. An agreement has been reached for 66,000 acre-feet for future recreational use in the lake. This is a 90 year lease. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may contribute some money to support this lease; a meeting to discuss this will be held in July.
  - There has been a change in part of the ownership of the reservoir. Johnson Co. is now the only county left with ownership in the reservoir. Sasol North America, Inc. now owns approximately 60,000 acre-feet.
- Tongue River Reservoir – Art Hayes, Tongue River Water Users Association, and Kevin Smith, State of Montana, reported the following:
  - Tongue River Reservoir is currently at 55,270 acre-feet which is 68% of the total capacity of the reservoir. The current outflow is down to 100 cfs and the inflow is about 150-160 cfs. The normal outflow for this reservoir is 350-360 cfs.
- Cooney and Glacier Reservoirs; Rock Creek drainage Clarks Fork, Yellowstone - Kevin Smith, MT DNRC, reported the following:
  - As of March 20<sup>th</sup>, the capacity of Cooney Reservoir was 18,988 acre-feet. No report on Glacier Reservoir or the Rock Creek drainage.

5. Hydrologic Update - MT and WY USGS

Wayne Berkas, with the MT USGS, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the different gages in the basin and discussed each one briefly. Each slide shows the daily average discharge from January 1, 2012 to April 10, 2013. For a copy of this presentation, go **here-4**.

Yellowstone River at Corwin Springs, MT  
 Clarks Fork Yellowstone River at Edgar, MT  
 Bull Lake Creek above Bull Lake, WY  
 Shell Creek above Shell Creek Reservoir, WY  
 Bighorn River at Kane, WY  
 Little Bighorn River near Hardin, MT  
 Bighorn River above Tullock Creek near Bighorn, MT  
 Tongue River at State Line near Decker, MT  
 Tongue River at Miles City, MT  
 Powder River at Moorhead, MT

Little Powder River above Dry Creek, near Weston, WY  
Powder River near Locate, MT

6. Reservoir Assignment (Table 10)

The group decided there was no more work needed on this table. Montana did agree to add Glacier Lake to Table 10. Wayne stated that this reservoir will be in the 2013 report.
7. Stream gage funding

Wayne Berkas and Kirk Miller, WY USGS, gave a PowerPoint presentation on stream gage funding. Compact gages qualify for NSIP funding, however, funding is very limited. The YRCC rules mention States and USGS sharing the cost of the gages. A copy of Wayne and Kirk's presentation can be found [here-5](#).
8. Adjusting tributary flows for change in contents of major downstream reservoir

Chuck Dalby, MT DNRC, and Wayne Berkas led a discussion on adjusting tributary flows. A question came up that the flows are adjusted for Big Horn, why are the numbers not being adjusted for Tongue River? Carmine LoGuidice, Chuck Dalby, and Wayne Berkas will look into this issue.
9. Coalbed Natural Gas (CBNG)

Montana DEQ update – Amy Steinmetz reported the following:  
Currently, EPA is reviewing MT standards. The Otter Creek TMDL will be completed early next year. This TMDL only applies to the portion of Otter Creek located in MT. The Tongue River and Powder River TMDLs will start early next year and both will be interstate TMDLs.

Wyoming SEO update - Jodee Pring reported the following:  
The number of ground water permits issued in the state since the CBNG play began continues to decrease. Reservoir permits issued in the Tongue River, Little Powder River and Powder River drainages in the past year have slowed down quite a bit.
10. Status of MBMG Stateline Monitoring

Chuck Dalby reported the following:  
The 2012 monitoring update is out and can be found on the MBMG website. This is a summary report on 10 years of insight on MBMG monitoring.
11. “Blueways” Program

Jodee Pring directed the group's attention to three documents. The first document, Order No. 3321, is the order from the Secretary of the Interior establishing a National Blueways System. A copy of that handout can be found [here-6](#). She also showed the group two different articles; one from the December 6, 2012 Billings Gazette which can be found [here-7](#) and the other reporting a response to the Blueways program from the Wyoming delegation. A copy of that handout can be found [here-8](#).

The group discussed this program and decided that each state would monitor it for implications to the Yellowstone River.

12. State Adjudications and Water Rights  
Yellowstone River Basin Adjudications – Chris Smith reported the following:  
Basins 42B and 42C are in preliminary decree status. A copy of the MT adjudication map can be found [here-9](#).  
  
Wyoming –  
Carmine LoGuidice reported the following:  
As of last year, 8 groundwater permit and 44 surface water permits have been adjudicated. The SEO field staff has also inspected 151 stock reservoirs and those permits have received an endorsement stating that the reservoir has been constructed within the terms of the permit. Ten CBNG reservoirs were inspected; 8 were approved, and 2 were rejected.  
  
Loren Smith reported the following:  
For the Bighorn General Adjudication, there are only 2 permits left to go through the court. In the Bighorn drainage, 31 surface water permits and 4 groundwater permits were adjudicated. The SEO field staff inspected 13 stock reservoirs and 17 other permits including reservoirs and pipelines.
11. Website Discussion  
Wayne Berkas stated any updates or revisions to the website should be sent to him.
12. YRCC Records/ Archives  
Mark Anderson had all of the YRCC records he inherited scanned and copied to DVD. He provided each state with a copy of the DVD. Mr. Anderson asked the question, what do we do with YRCC information going forward? Mr. Anderson suggested the Commission have a discussion and make a decision on what are the “official” files of the YRCC. Mr. Anderson suggested the meeting minutes and the annual reports be the “official” YRCC documents.
13. Minutes of November YRCC meeting  
The draft 2012 YRCC report has been approved. At this point in time, Wayne is waiting for the edits to the minutes from each of the states.
14. Schedule next Spring Technical Advisory Committee meeting  
The next meeting of the YRCC Technical Advisory Committee was scheduled for April 10, 2014. Montana will host this meeting, probably in Billings.

The conference call and Go To meeting concluded at 4:00 p.m.

Attendees  
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<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Email</u>
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