



TO: Governance Committee (GC)
FROM: Executive Director's Office (EDO)
SUBJECT: Water Action Plan (WAP) Project Status and Scores
DATE: February 22, 2017

The Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (PRRIP or Program) has a water objective of reducing shortages to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)-defined target flows by 130,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) to 150,000 AFY by the end of the Program's First Increment in 2019. The three initial state projects—Pathfinder Modification in Wyoming, Tamarack I in Colorado, and the Lake McConaughy Environmental Account (EA) in Nebraska—collectively meet 80,000 AFY of that objective. The Program was tasked with implementing a Water Action Plan (WAP) to meet a milestone of developing projects to fulfill the remaining 50,000 AFY to 70,000 AFY of shortage reduction.

This document provides a brief update to project status information that was presented in the 2014 Water Action Plan (WAP) Update. In that report, completed nearly two years ago, the WAP included 14 potential water supply projects or project categories. Projects were prioritized on a 3-tiered system and were identified as presently active, anticipated for future activity near the end of the First Increment or beyond, or inactive for the duration of the First Increment. This memo was discussed with the Water Advisory Committee (WAC) during their February 28th, 2017 meeting.

At the time, the J-2 Regulating Reservoirs were the most significant of the active projects, with an approved Program score of 30,600 AFY representing more than 60 percent of the water needed to meet the WAP milestone. The Pathfinder Municipal Account Lease (4,000 AFY) and the Phelps County Canal Groundwater Recharge project (2,700 AFY) pushed the total score approved by the Program's Governance Committee (GC) to 37,300 AFY. Several elements of the WAP have changed in the ensuing time period, including the following:

- The GC approved a score of 260 AFY for the No Cost Net Controllable Conserved Water (NCCW) in March 2016.
- The GC approved a score of 160 AFY for the Cook Recapture Well in September 2016.
- The J-2 Regulating Reservoirs were formally placed on hold by the GC in November 2016 after more than a year of attempts to reconfigure the project due to escalating costs and other administrative factors, thereby eliminating 30,600 AFY of previously-approved score.
- Total approved score, excluding J-2 Regulating Reservoirs, now totals 7,120 AFY.
- The Executive Director's Office (EDO) began work assessing the feasibility of several new WAP projects, including broad-scale recharge, slurry wall gravel pit and/or aquifer storage, and efforts to acquire and retire irrigated farmland. Regular updates on these projects were presented to the Water Advisory Committee (WAC) and GC throughout 2016.

The table below summarizes the present status of each WAP project or project category.



36

List of WAP project tiers and project status updates

Tier	Project	Location	Status
Tier 1	<p>J-2 Regulating Reservoirs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program score = 30,600 AFY • On hold, per GC action on 11/02/2016. 	Nebraska	Active INACTIVE
	<p>Elm Creek Reregulating Reservoir</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility study completed in January 2011. • Presented to WAC in April 2011 and GC in June 2011. Based on extensive concerns, GC declined to move forward. • Review memo prepared for GC in November 2015. It is anticipated that costs to build the Elm Creek Reregulating Reservoir would be subject to the same cost escalation factors as the J-2 Regulating Reservoirs. 	Nebraska	Inactive
	<p>Slurry Wall Storage (NEW!)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open surface gravel pits or confined alluvial aquifer storage. • Active pursuit as a partial replacement for above-ground storage reservoirs • Proposed pilot project for PRRIP Elm Creek complex or other location. 	Nebraska	Active
	<p>Nebraska Groundwater Recharge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phelps County Canal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Program score = 2,700 AFY • Cook recapture well <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Program score = 160 AFY • CPNRD canals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Non-irrigation season recharge of divertible excess flows through Thirty Mile, Cozad, and Orchard-Alfalfa canals. ◦ Score analysis in progress. • NPPD canals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Non-irrigation season recharge of divertible excess flows through the Gothenburg and Dawson County canals. ◦ Score analysis anticipated late-2017. • Elwood Reservoir <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Non-irrigation season recharge of divertible excess flows. ◦ Score analysis anticipated in 2017. • Broad-Scale Recharge (NEW!) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Feasibility analyses at Cottonwood Ranch complex in 2016. ◦ Contractor selection for engineering design and construction administration underway in early-2017. 	Nebraska	Active
	<p>Net Controllable Conserved Water (No Cost)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program score = 260 AFY 	Nebraska	Active
	<p>Net Controllable Conserved Water (Purchased)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers made by CNPPID were not accepted by the GC in 2013 	Nebraska	Inactive



Tier	Project	Location	Status
	Pathfinder Municipal Account Lease <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program score = 4,000 AFY 	Wyoming	Active
	Glendo Reservoir Storage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlikely to become available in near future. • Preliminary inquiries regarding unused Glendo contract irrigation water (delivered to Nebraska) unsuccessful. 	Wyoming	Inactive
	Colorado Groundwater Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tamarack III 	Colorado	Future
Tier 2	Nebraska Water Leasing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPRND canals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Active since 2013. ○ Surface water from Thirty Mile, Cozad, and Orchard-Alfalfa canals during irrigation season. • CNPPID irrigators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 9 inches/acre into EA. ○ 1,037 acres in 2016. ○ 1,275 acres in 2017. • CNPPID storage lease <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Draft WSA from 2014. • NPPD canal(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dawson County Canal. ○ Transfer application submitted in July 2013, not yet approved by Nebraska DNR. 	Nebraska	Active/Future
	Acquire & Retire (NEW!) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alliance Canal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One property acquired. ○ Current primary focus for additional land. • Emphasis on North Platte above McConaughy. • Canals without Federal water contracts. • Will evaluate opportunities as they come about, but not actively soliciting outside of Alliance. 	Nebraska	Active
	Nebraska Water Management Incentives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Options such as deficit irrigation may be pursued. 	Nebraska	Future
	Nebraska Groundwater Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funk Lagoon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ WAC recommended no further pursuit as WAP project in October 2015. 	Nebraska	Future
Tier 3	Power Interference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not included in First Increment budget; no plans to pursue. 	Nebraska	Inactive
	Wyoming Water Leasing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No plans to pursue during First Increment (export issues). 	Wyoming	Inactive
	LaPrele Reservoir <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not included in First Increment budget; no plans to pursue. 	Wyoming	Inactive