

Upper Niobrara River Compact Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (NeDNR)

Wyoming State Engineer's Office (WSEO)

3:00 PM Mountain Time

November 7th, 2017

1. Introductions and agenda review (Attachments A & B)

Tom Hayden	NeDNR	Jeff Cowley	WSEO
Carrie Wiese	NeDNR	John Harju	WSEO
Melissa Mosier	NeDNR	Brian Pugsley	WSEO
Jeremy Gehle	NeDNR	Wray Lovitt	WSEO
Gordon "Jeff" Fassett	NeDNR	Pat O'Brien	UNWNRD
Charlie Ferrantelli	WSEO	Bill Wilson	Public

2. Review of previous meetings

- a. **Review of minutes from October 22, 2015, meeting:** The suggested revision from the October 2016 meeting was made and the minutes were shared between Nebraska and Wyoming.
- b. **Review of minutes from October 5, 2016, meeting:** No corrections or additions were made to the October 2016 minutes and they are now published on the NeDNR website.
- c. **Review of Technical Group discussions from April 20, 2017:** No corrections or additions were made to the notes from the April 2017 Technical Group discussions and they are also published on the NeDNR website.

3. State Reports

- a. **Wyoming:** Wray Lovitt reported that there was no cause for regulation during the summer. There were no observed surface water diversions in the Niobrara drainage. It was a mostly normal year and no significant changes to the channel as a result of the 2015 flooding were observed. The state line gage is now slightly less silted in. John Harju shared a list of approved permits in Wyoming's portion of the Niobrara River Basin (Attachment C). Newly issued permits included a temporary surface water permit was issued for a period of two years, two permits for new irrigation wells, three permits for land purchased by an existing groundwater user, and a new domestic well. Lastly, groundwater hydrographs, previously made available by the USGS, are now available by county on the Wyoming SEO's website (<https://sites.google.com/a/wyo.gov/seo/documents-data/groundwater-hydrographs>). Harju shared a few screenshots of the new interface with the group (Attachment D)
- b. **Nebraska:** Tom Hayden reported on measurements and activities in the Nebraska portion of the Basin. Box Butte Reservoir started to be drained in May 2017 in

preparation for toe drain repairs. As of this meeting, the contractor has not begun repair work and Box Butte is storing water again. In June 2017 water had to be administered for Spencer, but irrigators with subordination agreements were quickly turned back on. Also, 14 canals came on in the Compact section of the River, from the state line to Agate.

4. Update on studies related to the Niobrara Basin

- a. Niobrara River Basin WaterSMART Study:** No progress has been made since the last meeting. The report was sent to the Bureau of Reclamation headquarters but has been in review since then.
 - b. Aquifer Absent Study:** The contract deadline had to be extended to finish all tasks, but the goal is to have the study and reporting done by the end of 2017. As of this meeting, the contract had not yet been signed and returned by UNL's Conservation and Survey Division, so the completion timeline is an estimate.
 - c. UNWNRD Conjunctive Management Model Project:** This is still in development and there are no updates.
 - d. Park Service and USGS Niobrara National Scenic River Hydrogeologic Study and Modeling:** In August 2017, a meeting took place between the National Park Service (NPS), USGS, NeDNR, and the Niobrara NRDs to get updates on the modeling efforts. There has been one follow up phone call between NeDNR and NPS since that time.
- 5. Compact discussion:** No discussion on this agenda item.
- 6. Other Items:** No discussion on this agenda item.
- 7. Public comment:** Bill Wilson thanked the group for making the historical correction to the 2015 minutes documenting the two separate rain events that occurred. The flood did make some changes to the channel, but not as significant as one would have hoped. He continued to request to know the number of square miles of the Main Stem, Duck Creek, and the Van Tassel drainage including the Nebraska portion. Wray Lovitt was able to provide the area of the Main Stem, Duck Creek, and the entire Van Tassel drainage at the meeting.¹
- 8. Next meeting date:** Melissa Mosier will send out a doodle poll to schedule the next Niobrara Compact Technical Group meeting (via conference call) and it will occur around the time of the NPDC meeting.

¹ Following the meeting, Charlie Ferrantelli provided the area of the Nebraska and Wyoming portions of the Van Tassel drainage.

AGENDA

UPPER NIOBRARA RIVER COMPACT ANNUAL MEETING

Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (NeDNR)
Wyoming State Engineer's Office (WSEO)

November 7, 2017, 3:00 p.m. (Mountain Time)
Branding Room
Goshen Co. Fairgrounds, Torrington, Wyoming

Agenda Items:

1. Introductions and agenda review
2. Review of previous meetings
 - a. Minutes from October 22, 2015, annual meeting
 - b. Minutes from October 5, 2016, annual meeting
 - c. Recap Technical Group discussions from April 20, 2017
3. State reports
 - a. Wyoming
 - a. Nebraska
4. Update on studies related to the basin
 - a. Niobrara River Basin WaterSMART Grant
 - b. UNWNRD Conjunctive Management Model Project
 - c. CSD Aquifer Absent Study
 - d. NPS/USGS Niobrara National Scenic River hydrogeologic study and modeling efforts
5. Compact discussion
6. Other items
7. Public comment period
8. Set date for next Upper Niobrara River Compact meeting and Technical group
9. Adjourn

Permits Approved in Niobrara River Basin in Wyoming since Last Fall Meeting on October 5, 2016

WR Number	PriorityDate	Company	FirstName	LastName	FacilityName	Uses	Tw	Rng	Sec	Qtr-Qtr	Appropriation(GPM)	Longitude	Latitude
P35663.0D	09/27/2016	WYDOT	MATT	SIMPSON	N403008 (2) WATER HAUL	TEM	031N	060W	16	NE1/4SE1/4	1	-104.066	42.66056
P207234.0W	05/10/2017		LINDA AND DENNIS E	ISAKSON	ENL. COLE #1	DOM_GW;STK	030N	061W	06	NW1/4NW1/4	10	-104.239	42.61014
P207235.0W	05/09/2017		LINDA AND DENNIS E	ISAKSON	LDI #1	STK	030N	061W	06	NW1/4NW1/4	20	-104.242	42.61192
P207236.0W	05/10/2017		DENNIS E AND LINDA	ISAKSON	ENL. HOLMES #8	STK	031N	061W	30	SE1/4NE1/4	10	-104.224	42.63543
P207611.0W	07/12/2017		LOREN AND ROBYN	HETH	HETH #400	DOM_GW;STK	033N	062W	23	SW1/4SW1/4	25	-104.279	42.81566
P208115.0W	09/18/2017	A AND E LAND AND CATTLE LLC			WEST PFISTER #1	IRR_GW	031N	062W	10	NE1/4SW1/4	1200	-104.293	42.67452
P208116.0W	09/18/2017	A AND E LAND AND CATTLE LLC			EAST PFISTER #1	IRR_GW	031N	062W	14	SW1/4NW1/4	1200	-104.277	42.66297

Notes:

The State Engineer's Office is still holding, unapproved, four irrigation use applications that violate the spacing policy currently in place for irrigation use wells in the area.

The "TEM" use associated with Permit No. 35663 Ditch allows a total of 2,000,000 gallons of water from Van Tassell Creek at a rate of 1 C.F.S and used for road construction over a period of two years.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Wyoming State Engineer's Office website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: <https://sites.google.com/a/wyo.gov/seo/>. The website header includes the text "Wyoming State Engineer's Office" and "Administering Wyoming's Water Resources" above a landscape image. A navigation menu contains links for Home, Ground Water, Surface Water, Interstate Streams, Agency Divisions, Documents/Data, Regulations/Instructions, and Applications/Forms. A search box is located in the top right corner.

On the left side, a dropdown menu is open under "Sign Up", listing various services such as "Permitting/Adjudication/Changes", "Applications/Forms/Instructions", "Metering and Reporting", "Water Well Construction", "State Engineer's Orders", "Groundwater Control Areas & Advisory Boards", "Groundwater Advisory Committees", "Ground Water Monitoring Well Network", "Groundwater Hydrographs", and "Interference Investigations".

The main content area features a "News releases!" section with three buttons: "News & Press Releases", "Realtime Streamflow Data", and "Wyoming Snow Data". Below this is a prominent heading: "Pilot System Water Conservation Program RFP Released OCTOBER 2, 2017".

The body text of the press release reads: "The Upper Colorado River Commission (UCRC) has issued another Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Pilot System Water Conservation Program for the Upper Colorado River Basin. This RFP is for consideration of projects to be implemented in 2018. Facing declining levels in Lakes Powell and Mead, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and major water providers that depend on the Colorado River Basin supplies have made available money for use in the Upper Colorado River Basin to fund the Pilot System Water Conservation Program. This program is designed to develop and test tools that could potentially be used as part of a drought contingency plan to help protect storage within the Colorado River basin. This is the fourth round of proposals that the UCRC, funding partners and Wyoming State Engineer's Office will consider. All users of Colorado River water (Green and Little Snake River basins) are encouraged to consider developing a pilot project for consideration under this RFP."

Contact information is provided: "For questions, please contact Charlie Ferrantelli (charlie.ferrantelli@wyo.gov; 307-777-6151) or Steve Wolff (steve.wolff@wyo.gov; 307-777-1942)."

The meeting details are: "There will be an informational meeting on November 21st at 10 a.m. at the Pinedale Library".

At the bottom, there is a link for "Wyoming's Press Release" and a browser status bar showing the URL: <https://sites.google.com/a/wyo.gov/seo/documents-data/groundwater-hydrographs>.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Wyoming State Engineer's Office website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: <https://sites.google.com/a/wyo.gov/seo/documents-data/groundwater-hydrographs>. The website header features the Wyoming State Engineer's Office logo and the tagline "Administering Wyoming's Water Resources". A navigation menu includes links for Home, Ground Water, Surface Water, Interstate Streams, Agency Divisions, Documents/Data, Regulations/Instructions, and Applications/Forms. The main content area is titled "Groundwater Hydrographs" and lists the following sections:

- Albany County**
[Albany County Monitor Well Map and Hydrographs](#)
SEO Contact: George Moser (307) 777-2974
- Campbell County**
[Campbell County Monitor Well Map and Hydrographs](#)
SEO Contact: Jeremy Manley (307) 777-7730
- Converse County**
[Converse County Monitor Well Map and Hydrographs](#)
SEO Contact: Jeremy Manley (307) 777-7730
- Crook and Weston Counties**
[Crook and Weston Counties Monitor Well Map and Hydrographs](#)
SEO Contact: George Moser (307) 777-2974
- Goshute County (Northern)**

NiobraraCo.pdf - Adobe Acrobat Reader DC
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Wyoming State Engineer's Office Niobrara County Monitoring Wells

Description

- Active Wells
- State Boundary
- County Boundaries

Roads

TYPE

- Interstate
- US
- State
- County

Scale: 0 3.5 7 14 Miles

Source: Esri, Digital Globe, GeoEye, AeroCast, USDA, USGS, CNR, Swiremaping, AeroGRID, IGN, GEBCO, Swiremaping, and the GIS User Community

Van Tassel

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