



May 26, 2009

**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM

Risk
Management
Agency

TO: Anne Jenkins
RMSD

Topeka
Regional Office

FROM: Rebecca Davis
Topeka RO Director

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SUBJECT: Topeka Regional Irrigation Assessment for the 2009 Crop Year

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In accordance with the Loss Adjustment Manual Standards Handbook (FCIC-25010), which directs the Regional Office (RO) to provide a regional assessment in order to identify areas and water districts where inadequate irrigation water supply is suspected, the following is the list of counties from the Topeka RO:

Fax:
(785) 228-1456

Nebraska:

Southwest and Central, Nebraska:

The following information was received from the Bureau of Reclamation in McCook, Nebraska. The irrigation districts with estimated water allocations are shown below, with the percent change based on a comparison to a full supply.

<u>Irr District</u>	<u>** Est. Farm Delivery (Ac.Inches as of 02/13/2008)</u>	<u>* % of Normal Supply</u>
Mirage Flats	3.5"	58%
Frenchman Valley and H & RW	1.0"	25%
Frenchman-Cambridge		
Meeker, Red Willow & Bartley	8.0"	67%
Cambridge Canal	8.0"	67%

* Based on figures for 2000 Crop Year. Subject to change based on most probable inflows during Insurance period.

** These estimates do not reflect the possible sale of water to the State of Nebraska for

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delivery to the State of Kansas.

Counties affected by the above allocations are **Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock and Red Willow.**

Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation and Nebraska Public Power Districts:

The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District that stores water in Lake McConaughy has announced that they will be providing a reduced supply of 8.4 acre-inches to its irrigators. This is down from their normal supply of 18 acre-inches. They indicated they will also have a shorter irrigation season. They will begin the season on June 23rd and end on August 31st. There will be 5 runs instead of the normal 6 runs with half the normal volume per run. The district feels, however, that by allowing irrigators to transfer surface water shares in conjunction with use of supplemental wells, that most acreage could be properly irrigated. It is important to emphasize that each irrigators water situation could be different depending on the availability of supplemental irrigation sources. CNPPID will unlikely be able to supply a full allocation of storage water to the Paxton-Hershey, Suburban, Keith-Lincoln, Lisco, and Platte Valley Districts as it does not look as though Lake McConaughy will reach the 800,000 acre foot plus the amount in the Environmental Account level by April 15th of this year. CNPPID will also likely agree to store water from these districts' direct stream flow rights prior to this year's irrigation season if the districts decide to have them do so. Either option will result in a below normal amount of storage water available to the irrigation districts from Lake McConaughy.

Nebraska Public Power District will have a full supply of supplemental storage water available for its customers. With NPPD's storage water only being a supplemental supply, the seven canals we serve are very dependent on the available natural flow to have a full water supply. Absent return of significant drought conditions during the spring and summer of 2009, conditions look favorable to have the natural flow in the river to allow delivery of a full supply of water to its irrigators on the Gothenburg, Dawson County, and Kearney Canals. NPPD will also be able to provide supplemental storage water to the Cozad, 30 Mile, 6 Mile and Orchard-Alfalfa canals as we have in past years. These seven irrigation canals have historically relied on stored water for 17% of their irrigation water diversions (based on 1979-2008 data) and 35% for the drought period of 2000-2006.

Counties affected by the above irrigation districts are **Buffalo, Deuel, Dawson, Garden, Gosper, Phelps, Kearney, and Lincoln.**

Nebraska Panhandle:

The March 1, 2009 determination of the forecasted supply for the North Platte Project indicates that no allocation is expected. Therefore, the irrigation demand will be met for the North Platte contractors.

As of February 28, 2009 Nebraska Glendo Contractors Bridgeport and Enterprise have a full annual deliverable contract amount available to them. Mitchell's deliverable annual contract amount is

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12,000 AF and they presently have 10,278 AF available. Based on our current forecast, we are not expecting Glendo to accrue additional water at this time.

The timing and quantity of the snowmelt runoff will be critical as to the amount of water available for the North Platte Project and Glendo Contractors in Nebraska.

The Pumpkin Creek Groundwater Management Sub-Area will have a 12" per acre allocation, down from last year's allocation which was 14" per acre.

Counties affected include **Banner, Scotts Bluff, and Morrill.**

The crops that are affected in **Nebraska** are **Barley, Corn, Dry Beans, Grain Sorghum, Oats, Potatoes, Soybeans, Sugar Beets, Sunflowers.**

Colorado:

South Platte Basin (Northeast Colorado)

Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI) value was reported at +0.2 for the month of April. This SWSI value would indicate that water supplies are normal. Cumulative storage in the major plains reservoirs: Julesburg, North Sterling and Prewitt, is at 92% of capacity. Cumulative storage in the major upper-basin reservoirs: Cheesman, Eleven Mile, Spinney and Antero, is at 95% of capacity. The Natural Resources Conservation Service reported that May 1 snow pack is 106% of normal. Due to snowfall in late March, conditions have improved for 2009 delaying the direct flow call. While the South Platte Basin has shown improvement, the two districts under CCWCD are still not back to 100% allocation.

The counties affected by potential irrigation water shortages at this time in the South Platte are: **Adams, Morgan, and Weld.**

The crops that are affected in the South Platte Basin are **Barley, Corn, Sweet Corn, Dry Beans, Grain Sorghum, Oats, Onions, Potatoes, Soybeans, Sugar Beets, Sunflowers, and Wheat.**

If you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact our office.