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Date: Wed, 15 May 96 13:28:59 UT
From: "Bill Sikonia" <Bill_Sikonia@msn.com>
To: TCID@sierra.net
Subject: Truckee-Carson activities April 30-May 8, 1996

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Truckee-River Operating Agreement (TROA) negotiations continued May 1-2, 1996, in Reno. The purpose of this meeting was to resolve "critical path" California issues so that the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) could proceed. The negotiators were successful in formulating solutions all could live with, and work on the EIS has resumed.

One of the trickiest issues to resolve came early the first day and concerned storage in California. After considerable discussion, especially among California, the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, and Sierra Pacific, the negotiators arrived at an acceptable solution: California could build up to 2,500 acre feet of its own storage without reduction in Federal storage. It could also build up to 8,000 acre feet of additional storage beyond the 2,500. However, each acre foot of its own storage beyond the 2,500 reduces its total storage in Federal reservoirs by 1 acre foot, and in particular reduces the amount it can divert to reservoirs other than Lake Tahoe by 3/8 of an acre foot. For example, if California develops 3,300 acre feet of storage total, the first 2,500 causes no reduction in Federal storage. The next 800 acre feet reduce its total Federal storage from 8,000 acre feet to 7,200 acre feet, and reduce the amount it can divert to reservoirs other than Lake Tahoe from 3,000 acre feet to 2,700 acre feet.

Ground-water pumping in California was another issue that the negotiators largely resolved. New wells in most cases will be placed 500 feet from major rivers, 200 feet from perennial tributaries, and 50 feet from ephemeral streams.

The group heard a preliminary definition of the "natural flow" of the Truckee River, from which California will make its diversions. The Truckee River Operations Subgroup will look into the definition, which is as follows: Natural flow is defined as all water flowing in the Truckee River at the California-Nevada State line, plus all diversions (including diversions to storage and export), and excluding all releases from Lake Tahoe, releases from other storage, importations, and return flow from diversions.

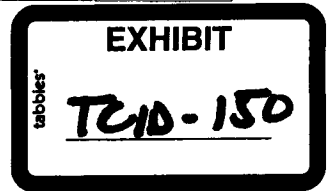
Questions for the subgroup: Does "diversion" include inflow to all reservoirs, including Lake Tahoe? Does this definition of "natural flow" match the definition in the Truckee River Agreement? Is this quantity as defined easily measurable and operationally useful? How do measurement errors affect the resultant "natural flow"? What about timing issues of flow routing, including flow delays and discharge modifications of the reservoirs? Are evaporation and seepage losses, and seepage gains, treated appropriately?

The group agreed to what had been called Negotiation Model run "9a" as the basis for the EIS. Run "9a" would be modified slightly by agreements during the meeting and called "9c," as the basic TROA for the EIS.

Some outstanding California issues remain. High Lake Tahoe levels may cause concerns regarding sediment input from wave action during storms, as well as impact on Tahoe yellow cress, which is listed as an endangered species by the State of California.

How to account for the water used in snowmaking still remains an issue: the difference seems mostly to be a question of whether to charge for a diversion at 10 percent or 20 percent against California's surface allocation. (The charge would only apply for diversions beyond base amounts of 600 acre feet in the Lake Tahoe basin and 225 acre feet per year in the Truckee River Basin exclusive of Lake Tahoe.)

How to balance recreational-pool levels with storage and instream-flow needs is also a topic that will be considered further.



The next TROA meeting will be in Tahoe City on July 16, 1996.

Besides the TROA meeting, work continued on documentation and quality assurance of the Negotiation Model. We used our newly defined procedure for entering internal documentation and modifications into one of the model's subroutines, Florat.f. The internal documentation is in the form of comment records in the Fortran code itself. We also corrected two very minor aspects of the logic flow.

We're using Microsoft's Word editing procedures to modify the code as a team. Word allows each of our team members to enter edits-internal documentation and quality assurance-in a different color, which distinguishes the changes from the original text and from modifications from other authors. We then entered the revised Florat.f module into the "Revision Control System" that tracks modifications to each of the model's subroutines. We will continue to work out the details of entering the revised documented and quality-assured subroutines formally as part of the model, including questions such as who will actually make the entries.

Another of subroutines that we're working on now, Fedred.f, is more difficult to understand than others that we've run into so far. The module considers storing surplus flows in Boca, Stampede, and Independence and exchanging water between reservoirs. We will continue working through this module and others we discussed at our last meeting on April 10. The next meeting of our team is May 21-22 at Stetson Engineers in San Rafael.

Best regards,
Bill Sikonia

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Calvin Lee