Minutes

1. Present: NDNR (Shuhai Zheng); LLCHD (John Chess); USACE (Brent Dinkel); UNL/CSD (Colleen Steele, Dana Divine, Troy Gilmore); NGPC (Frank Albrecht, Dave Tunink); NDEQ (Marty Link, Robert Parker, Tom Heatherly, Greg Michl, Dave Bubb, Mike Archer, John Bender, Carla McCullough, Laura Johnson, Sam Radford); USGS (Dave Rus, Amanda Flynn, Ginny McGuire, Brenda Densmore, Steve Peterson); LPSNRD (Dan Schulz, Dick Ehrman); NARD (Jennifer Swanson); NHHS (Elizabeth Esseks); ENWRA (Katie Cameron); JEO (Rick Wilson); Olsson’s (Karen Griffin); LLNRD (Tylr Naprstek); LPNNRD (John Miyoshi)

2. Short Business Meetings
3. Agency updates
   a. USGS
      i. Some new continuous water quality data sites this year:
         1. Nitrate data have shown higher concentrations in the Elkhorn Basin relative to the Central Platte
         2. Some expansion of continuous water temperature sites
         3. Inquired about the interest in continuous PO4 data; Sense from the group that total P is probably more relevant
      ii. List of pesticide analytes has grown over the last year
      iii. IT infrastructure that serves all USGS data is slated to be overhauled in the spring 2017. This is supposed to be seamless to users.
      iv. National brackish groundwater assessment soon available
      v. Supporting City of Lincoln with characterizing Arsenic in GW in the Ashland wellfield
      vi. WSF grant to convert AEM data into a 3D geologic model in Sarpy County related to the Mead site
      vii. Nutrient-processing monitoring in the rec. reach of the Missouri River
      viii. Steve Peterson is the new investigations chief for Nebraska; Continue with your primary USGS contacts, but he is another contact;
      ix. Finishing up GW model of the High Plains – Tool to look at future conditions; Report and model available in a month; Might tie in with water quality
      x. Stakeholder meetings planned for this spring (early April)
b. NDEQ
   i. WQ Standards – Rule change update; EPA is requiring the entire reg. list to be open to public comment; 2 hearings coming up (1 on December 13); Human health criteria are going to be changing (some stricter, some looser) as well as some housekeeping; Microcystin criteria coming that will probably be less than current 20 ppb (Winter 2017?). New MC number will get added to the existing narrative in the regs; Will add a number for cylindrospermospin; Selenium fish tissue aquatic criterion level will be changing (Most Se impairments will prob. Go away)
   ii. Nutrient impacts on biota – Currently at the correlation phase
   iii. Fish tissue – 40 sites total, 3 for PCB
   iv. Lakes – 30 lakes, a few fish kills, but mostly blue-green algae alerts; New MC level might get people’s attention; Outreach will be an important thing to address (this winter); Management solutions will be a challenge; Interest in giving feedback on outreach or management solutions can contact Mike Archer
   v. SW monitoring – Basin rotation sampling (Elkhorn and Mo Tribs done in 2016; N and S Platte and White Hat in 2017); Wahoo Creek Special Basin study that had intensive chemistry sampling paired with algal and eco. Sampling (done by UNL); Ambient stream monitoring – Hope to have 101 fixed sites in 2017
   vi. 2016 Integrated report is now released
   vii. Source Water Program – 3 grants coming up (Small scale ‘watershed management plans’ related to GW management);
       1. Stakeholder group has been set up to develop a state campaign for dealing with Nitrates at the Non-point level – Trying to come up with a consistent voice/message
   viii. Robert Parker is the new Clean Water Act coordinator at NDEQ
   ix. Taking informal comments on Title 122 (Subsurface injection) regs, plus housekeeping on some others
   x. Working w/ NARD to try to come up with common nomenclature on BMPs/management practices/management restrictions among the various NRDs and other agencies. This will help to tell the story of managing GW to non-Nebraska audiences (such as to produce a statewide map of areas where fertilizing is restricted)
   xi. 319 grants to be announced next month
       1. Getting EPA approval for the Bazile project has opened doors for other GW areas;
       2. Several watersheds across the state have applied for funds

c. JEO
   i. Impressive network of continuous quantity and quality data in Iowa between the University of Iowa and USGS (67 sites with continuous nitrate data, also exploring other nutrients)

d. NARD
i. Recreation website being updated to link back to the NDEQ alert site

e. ENWRA – Continued sampling at standard sites
   i. Also MEAD sampling related to top of the Dakota
   ii. WSF grant for age-dating sampling of secondary bedrock to help understand recharge rates; Will need to request well information from NRDs

f. Ne Health Dept
   i. Drug takeback program is expanding to statewide with funding from a few grants
   ii. New Cr(VI) MCL has been released with little fireworks (perhaps due to Brangelina issues)
   iii. More focus on application of regs following the Flint scenario
   iv. Getting a new director next month

g. LPSNRD
   i. Airborne ElectroMagnetic surveying being done in several eastern NRD areas; Helping understand many GW issues, including in wellhead protection areas
   ii. Regs are up for review this year; Seeing NO3 declines in some places, and are exploring how the regs will cycle down and what are the ‘triggers’ to cycling down? A good problem to have
   iii. Don’t see lots of tile drain installations in the district
   iv. Working on a project (Marsh Rim) to restore a saline wetland using brackish groundwater;

h. LLCHD
   i. City wide well sampling wrapping up
   ii. Jim Newman has moved on

i. USACE
   i. Sampling report coming out with most recent results from USACE sampling efforts

j. Ag Chem Clearinghouse
   i. Currently 480,000 analytical results from 27K wells; 120.4K of those are NO3 results
   ii. Data recently added and to be updated by December:
      1. 2015 data from 21 NRDs and LLCHD
      2. Some remaining 2008 ELISA pesticide data from NDA
      3. ENWRA ELISA data probably to be included as well
   iii. 2016 data requests will be coming out soon plus addressing any issues with the 2015 data
   iv. Website address will be changing. Current address will work until Jan 2017, but the new website is:

k. CSD
   i. Recent report available:
Aquifers of Nebraska I - The Codell Aquifer in Northeastern Nebraska, 2016, by Dana P. Divine, R.M. Joeckel, and Susan Olafsen Lackey: Bulletin 7 (New Series) Conservation and Survey Division School of Natural Resources

I. NDNR
   i. Annual fully appropriated report should be available by 1/1
   ii. 22 of 23 NRDs developing/developed IMPs
   iii. Director Fasset believes managing quantity and quality together is a smart strategy
   iv. Have finished rating the current WSF proposals and turning over to Natural Resources Commission
   v. Platte River Recovery Program entering the next 13-year phase
   vi. Participation in Missouri River Recovery Program to develop a draft EIS and management plan by end of calendar year; Comments on the draft were solicited. Contact Shuhai for more information on the plan; Mentioned some of the management currently being considered

m. NGPC
   i. Aquatic Invasive Species – 2015 law enacted; Program coordinator coming, but is held up; Zebra Mussel infestation all along the Missouri, but especially in Lewis and Clark Lake; Mussel veligers in Zorinsky
   ii. Cool water stream plan is now available online; Some NET money being used to support implementation of the plan
   iii. Get yourselves out and your kids out for upcoming hunting season

n. GW foundation
   i. Annual conference is in 10/24-26/2017 in Boise

o. Ollssons
   i. Assisting with the wholesale revision of the Papio NRD GW management plan; Public meetings on 11/9 and 11/10; Helpful to find out how GW management plans in adjacent NRDs may differ
   ii. Comment on the Tile Drains

p. Lower Loup NRD
   i. Installed flow meters in all wells on Area 28 – GW Management Area – Done for water quality; Data tracking challenges
   ii. Pibel lake – Real-time continuous water quality measurements being collected for a year now; Looking to expand the CWQ sites
   iii. S. Loup 319 grant in development (Quantity and quality)

q. LPNNRD
   i. At 150% of annual rainfall so far (most between 4/15 and 10/1), and irrigation is at 20% of normal
   ii. AEM flights of GW quantity management area
   iii. Basin Plan for the Lower Platte (several NRDs involved) in development addressing irrigation and municipal needs;
   iv. Phase II and III GW mgmt. areas; Seem to be seeing improvement along the margins of the Bellwood area; Seem to be seeing elevated levels in
the Schuyler area, but are starting to see implementation of new management practices there.

v. Heliborne phragmites spraying of 3,000 acres of the lower Platte (3 NRD area)

vi. Lower Platte Corridor Alliance – NRD is not paying dues this year, but there will be a discussion on November 15 at the Papio NRD to discuss the NRD’s role in the Alliance;

4. NSWMC/NGWMAC items (Kept short for time’s sake)
   a. Some discussion on tile drain impacts; Crop prices have probably slowed down the install of new tiles; General sense that it is an issue that will need to be addressed; Some are willing to get out ahead of it, but it sounds like lots of people are watching the outcome the Des Moines lawsuit before moving forward.
   b. Dave is interested in what folks think about the importance of water quality relative to water quantity in Nebraska and whether more outreach is needed. If interested, here is a short, completely non-scientific web-based survey to give feedback:
      
      https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/V6V2PXF

5. Short presentations:
   a. Bazile Groundwater Management Area – Laura Johnson, NDEQ
   b. Aquifer nitrate: perspectives from streambed sampling – Troy Gilmore, UNL

6. LUNCH

Some upcoming meetings of possible interest:


February 5-8, 2017; Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference, Lincoln, NE, http://www.midwestfw.org/index.html
April 10-12, 2017; Water for Food Global Conference, Lincoln, NE


Some recent publications of possible interest:

PROCEEDINGS of the 10th NATIONAL MONITORING CONFERENCE (May 2016 in Tampa, Florida)

