

## **FUNDAMENTAL REPUBLICAN RIVER TRUTHS**

- The Republican River is an 80% - 90% runoff-fed river.
- Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) studies verify that the biggest impacts on flows are conservation measures, e.g., terracing, farm ponds, CRP, eco-fallow, and conservation tillage that hold water on the land and keep it from running into the river.
- BOR studies also verify that riparian vegetation in and alongside the river consumes huge amounts of river water.
- In spite of these facts, DNR targets only groundwater irrigation while ignoring the major impacts on river flow (conservation measures and riparian vegetation).
- A workable solution must fully address conservation measures first, riparian vegetation second, surface water third, and then groundwater irrigation.
- Back in 1991, Harlan Reservoir went dry and the BOR was publicly proclaiming that Harlan would never fill again. In 1993, Harlan was full and overflowing.
- Harlan will fill again, and the "crisis" will essentially resolve itself.
- In the meantime, we must not allow the DNR to sell us down the river. The latest DNR proposal would do just that.
- Inter basin and intra basin transfers of surface and groundwater are doable and would go along way toward achieving compliance.
- The black box model that DNR uses in the groundwater pumping impact assessment and measurement process is flawed beyond belief. It must be scrapped and replaced with one that works.
- Kansas would have a very difficult task to prove actual damages. Milford Reservoir near Junction City, Kansas, which is the very end of the Republican River system, is nearly full.
- If DNR ordered regulation of groundwater use goes too far we believe this would result in a "taking" for which just compensation is required under the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

## **REPUBLICAN RIVER BASIN NRDs AND SCHOOLS STAND UP TO DEFEND IRRIGATION AND LOCAL ECONOMIES**

It now appears that all three natural resources districts in the Republican River Basin (RRB) are united and in agreement that the state DNR's direction and plans for appeasing Kansas are a "no go." This unity seemed to gel during a December 15 meeting in McCook, when DNR Director Ann Bleed in the presence of the governor, unveiled her plan for the RRB that basically involved cutting allocations in "quick responses" areas in the basin to between 2 1/2 - 5 inches per year for a five-year period beginning in 2008. Needless to say, the response to this proposal was shock. As Mike Clements of the Lower Republican NRD put it, the DNR plan is "unacceptable." End of discussion. The DNR plan is worse than unacceptable, and will never, ever happen. Mike Lucas, the superintendent of Franklin Public Schools, summed it up by calling

DNR's plan a "death sentence" for our schools. Finally, the schools are engaged and speaking out on this critical issue. Our state government and media seem to listen to and care about schools in a far more positive way than they do irrigators. We appreciate Mr. Lucas's leadership in defending the tax bases of RRB communities which depend upon high property valuations due to irrigation. Banks, ag machinery and implement dealers, feed, seed and chemical dealers all need to follow the schools' mobilization and get actively involved in protecting irrigation in the RRB before it is too late.