

STATE OF KANSAS

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GOVERNOR JEFF COLYER, M.D.

August 8, 2018

Mr. Jeff Fassett, Director
Nebraska Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 94676
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4676

Subject: Objection to Application A-19594, Option #1

Dear Director Fassett:

The state of Kansas objects to the Interbasin Transfer from the Platte River to the Republican River Basin. Application A-19594 was filed with the Department of Natural Resources on April 4, 2018 by the Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District (CNPPID) and the Platte Republican Diversion Interlocal Agreement Partners. While the application states that no Adverse Impacts exist, the transfer will provide a pathway for invasive species of fish to enter the Republican River Basin where currently, no evidence of these species exists.

According to the Nebraska Department of Game and Parks, Asian carp (bighead and silver carp) have been documented over the past several years in the upper sections of the Loup, Platte and Elkhorn rivers. Numerous adults were sampled in 2017 in the Elkhorn and an overwintering population of both silver and bighead were documented in Turkey Creek (near Kearney, NE) which is a tributary of the Platte River which is the first documentation of an overwintering population in this area. The Department has also documented the existence of Asian Carp at the J2 return.

Asian carp have decimated sportfish populations and pose safety hazards to river and reservoir recreationalists in many parts of the United States, most recently at Barkley and Kentucky Lakes in Kentucky. Harlan County Reservoir would be impacted by the presence of these species as well as Lovewell and Milford Reservoirs in Kansas, and eventually, the upper Kansas River. Not only will species have a detrimental environmental effect on the Republican and Kansas River systems, but will have profound economic impact to the state of Kansas and local economies surrounding the reservoirs. The Kansas Republican River Compact Administration team has collaborated with the state of Nebraska to develop strategies providing greater water certainty for our water users and we support water supply strategies to insure compliance with the Compact. However, the invasive species implications to the Republican River resulting from the Platte River transfer proposal prohibit Kansas from supporting its' permit approval. For these reasons, I recommend that Application A-19594 be denied.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeff Colyer".

Jeff Colyer, M.D.
Governor