

NEWS RELEASE

Nebraska Department of Natural Resources

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Use of High Flows in Nebraska River Basins to Study Groundwater Recharge

(Lincoln,NE) The Nebraska Department of Natural Resources is contacting irrigation districts in Nebraska river basins which have been previously determined to be fully or overappropriated to identify irrigation districts that are interested in participating in conjunctive management demonstration projects this spring. The demonstration projects will occur when flows are expected to be high. These demonstration projects will benefit the state by moving some high flows out of the rivers during potential flood risk times and by storing some of the flows in the aquifer, potentially assisting the state with future interstate compliance efforts.

The projects will involve coordinating with irrigation districts to divert excess flows into their canals and allowing that water to seep into the ground through the unlined canals, pits, and other existing storage facilities. Funding for these projects in the Platte River Basin will be financed by the Platte Basin Habitat Enhancement Program, which includes support from local natural resources districts and the Department of Natural Resources.

Brian Dunnigan, Director of the Department of Natural Resources, stated that “the unique conditions this year present an excellent opportunity for water managers to study the potential benefits of implementing these types of projects, as well as the persistence of the water being stored in the aquifers.” The Department of Natural Resources has worked closely with the local natural resource districts and other water managers to develop models and other tools that allow the benefits of these types of conjunctive management strategies to be evaluated. This demonstration project builds on those models and tools, as well as allows for identification of locations best suited for these types of projects as additional opportunities present themselves in the future.

For more information on this project or to express an interest in participating in the project, please contact Jesse Bradley at the Integrated Water Management Division of the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources at (402) 471-0586 or jesse.bradley@nebraska.gov.

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