STATE OF NEBRASKA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ORDER GRANTING PETITION VAR-4706 FOR LEAVE TO FILE OR CONSIDER AN APPLICATION FOR A NEW SURFACE WATER APPROPRIATION WITHIN A MORATORIUM OR STAY AREA

WATER DIVISION 1-B

BACKGROUND

1. On July 14, 2004, the Department of Natural Resources (Department) issued an Order declaring a formal moratorium in the Republican River Basin on the issuance of all new surface water appropriations.

2. On May 28, 2013, Gary D. and Judy L. Malone (Petitioners), filed petition VAR-4706 in the Department for Leave to File or Consider an Application for a New Surface Water Appropriation within a Moratorium Area (Petition). The draft application and documentation attached to the petition is for a permit to impound approximately 77.1 acre-feet of water from a tributary to Stinking Water Creek in the existing Bigger Stink Reservoir located in the SE¼SE¼ of Section 09, Township 05 North, Range 34 West of the 6th P.M. in Hayes County for the purpose of water for livestock.

3. During the pendency of this petition, Gary D. and Judy L. Malone sold the real estate on which the dam and reservoir exist. The new owners, Blaine and Tessa Stinson, have requested that the petition be granted. The delay in considering the petition was not due to any action of either the Malone's or the Stinson's.

4. Department records of aerial photography dating back to 1993 for this location show this dam and reservoir in existence and impounding water.

5. *Nebraska Revised Statutes* § 46-714(3)(n) allows for new surface water appropriations if the Department grants leave to file an application and subsequently approves a permit for such use.

6. When filing such a petition, a project proponent must offer a clearly stated basis for such request and must offer sufficient good cause shown. *Department of Natural Resources Rules for Surface Water, Title 457 Neb. Admin. Code* Chapter 23 lists six circumstances that may be put forward as justification for granting a petition to apply for a permit to impound water, in conjunction with an examination of good cause shown.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Petitioners have shown good cause in that the impoundment has been providing the benefits of erosion control and water for livestock for many years.

2. The Bigger Stink Reservoir existed prior to the formal moratorium.

3. Therefore, petition VAR-4706 should be granted and the Petitioners should be allowed to file an application for a permit to impound water.

ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. Petition VAR-4706 meets the requirement of *Department of Natural Resources Rules of Surface Water, Title 457 Neb. Admin. Code* Chapter 23, § 001.04, and is GRANTED.

2. This Order granting leave to file or consider an application for a new surface water appropriation within a moratorium or stay area pursuant to petition VAR-4706 shall be in effect for one year from the date this order is signed.

3. This decision shall not bind the Director to approve any application to which it relates, or in any way be used as evidence of prejudice for the Director's future decisions concerning the specific approval requirements of such an application.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

November 19, 2015

Gordon W. Fassett, P.E., Director

A copy of this Order was posted on the Department's website. A copy of this Order was provided to the Department's field office in Cambridge, Nebraska. A copy of this Order was mailed on November 19, 2015, to the following:

Blaine and Tessa Stinson
72838 Avenue 356
Palisade, Nebraska 69040