

MINUTES OF THE
2014 ANNUAL BASIN-WIDE PLAN MEETING FOR
JOINT INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT OF
OVERAPPROPRIATED PORTIONS OF THE PLATTE RIVER BASIN

June 19th, 2014 1:00 p.m. CDT

Tri-Basin Natural Resources District office,
1723 Burlington St., Holdrege, Nebraska

Attendance:

Mike Drain	CNPPID	Travis Glanz	SPNRD
Jesse Mintken	CPNRD	Rod Horn	SPNRD
Lyndon Vogt	CPNRD	Ryan Reisdorff	SPNRD
Dustin Wilcox	NARD	John Thorburn	TBNRD
Jesse Bradley	NDNR	John T. Heaston	TNC
Melissa Mosier	NDNR	Ann Dimmitt	TPNRD
Jennifer Schellpeper	NDNR	Kent O. Miller	TPNRD
Jessie Wietjes	NDNR	Landon Shaw	TPNRD
Frank Albrecht	NGPC	Milt Dahlgren	
Gene Zuerlein	NGPC	Greg Heiden	
John Berge	NPNRD	Sheila Kurtz	
Tina Kurtz	NPNRD	Scott Olson	
Jeff Shafer	NPPD	Larry Reynolds	
Jerry Kenny	PRRIP	Tom Schwarz	

- 1) **Introductions:** The attendance sheet is included as Attachment A.

- 2) **Review Agenda & Meeting Procedures:** Thorburn stated that the intent of the meeting was to report on progress made over the past year on the Platte Basin-Wide Plan in the overappropriated portion of the Upper Platte Basin. The meeting will include time for the members of the Platte Overappropriated Area Committee (POAC) to present their annual reports, as well as time for members of the public to make comments. The meeting agenda is included as Attachment B.

- 3) **Monitoring & Management Actions**
 - a) **DNR Report:** Wietjes reported that between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2013, the Department issued zero surface water permits or dam safety permits, and one municipal groundwater transfer permit. The municipal groundwater transfer permit covered three wells in the NPNRD. Because this one transfer permit resulted in an overall decrease in water use and a positive net cumulative effect to the stream compared to historical use, no additional depletion or offset mitigation analysis was required. There were six cancelled surface water permits: four were temporary permits that expired in 2013, and two were relinquished irrigation water permits. Copies of the applications and orders for these permits are available in the Appendix of the Department's 2013 Annual Report at their website (<http://dnr.nebraska.gov/iwm/dnr-annual-reports-for-platte-basin-wide-meeting>). The net effect of the 2013 permitted activities did not require depletion or

offset/mitigation analyses or estimates. For activities that are required to be reported on a five-year basis, the Department's only update was that the inventory of sandpits and reservoirs less than 15 acre-feet from 2005-2010 has recently been completed.

b) NRD Reports

- i) CPNRD:** Mintken provided the report for CPNRD. The CPNRD currently has 1,025,466 certified irrigated acres, which is an increase of 8,877 acres from 2010-2013. This increase is attributed to the fact that CPNRD is still certifying irrigated acres and the transfer process used by the District. In 2013, 339 transfers were approved. These transfers involved 2,020.1 acres of new irrigated lands and 1,461.4 certified acres used to offset the new uses. There were 308 well permits issued in 2013: eight were voided and one was not approved due to spacing requirements. One perpetual conservation easement was acquired on 19 acres in Dawson County with an estimated accretion to the Platte River of 10.57 acre-feet due to the groundwater retirement. In the area with impacts to the Platte River below Chapman (IBC area), the CPNRD can allow 2,500 acres per year to be developed without having to provide an offset. In 2013, CPNRD approved 132 applications for a total of 2,484 acres and 206.28 acre-feet of depletion to the Platte River. The CPNRD Water Bank had a balance of 2,464 acre-feet available for offset. CPNRD is also in the process of rehabbing three surface water canals in Dawson County for the continued purpose of delivery to irrigated fields, and also to retune flows in the Platte River to enhance target flows, to recharge groundwater, and to transfer surface water irrigation flows to instream flows which will be diverted back into the Platte River. CPNRD has also continued working on conjunctive water management studies with the DNR, Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD), and TPNRD. CPNRD has also collaborated with DNR, UNL Extension, a local farming family, and Micrometer on the Crop Irrigation and Demand Network which will provide real-time data on how much water is pumped and precipitated on a daily basis throughout the District. The ultimate goal of this project is to provide a large amount of data that can be used to help develop irrigation efficiencies.
- ii) NPNRD:** Berge reported that NPNRD approved three transfers of certified acres which included 83.1 acres: 82.2 irrigable acres at the new locations and 0.9 acres that were put into the NPNRD water bank. One variance was approved because it resulted in a reduction in well depletion percentage. Thirty-one well construction permits were issued: 22 replacement wells (one of these was not drilled), two new wells associated with transfers, four test wells (two of these were not drilled), and three new industrial wells (one of these was not drilled). Based on well flow meter data, the preliminary estimate of groundwater withdrawn in 2013 is 147,041 acre-feet on 180,351 certified acres, for an average withdrawal of 9.8 acre-inches per year. There were 142.3 certified acres that were retired through AWEP in 2013. NPNRD also entered into a five-year surface water lease agreement with CID for 350.7 acres, the water for which will be used for a surface water recharge pilot project. Municipal use in the NPNRD ranged from 127.2 to 284.8 gallons per capita per day. The Western Sugar Cooperative's use was slightly below the baseline and

the Bridgeport Ethanol's use was slightly above the baseline, but the amount which had exceeded the baseline had already been offset.

- iii) **SPNRD:** Reisdorff reported that SPNRD approved 10 transfers: seven were industrial transfers and three were transfers related to irrigation. Nine replacement wells were permitted. SPNRD approved 11 variances: nine related to irrigation and two related to industrial uses. SPNRD monitors 28 active industrial wells which may be handled in several different ways: some are new industrial wells that must be offset, and others that have a certified baseline. The 10 municipalities in the SPNRD with established baselines pumped a combined total of approximately 1.1 billion gallons. SPNRD recorded 132,938 total certified irrigated acres in 2013, on which 120,615 acre-feet of water was pumped, resulting in an average of 11.5 inches per acre throughout the NRD. 2013 was the seventh year for groundwater allocations in the Lodgepole area, and the fifth year of groundwater allocations for the Tableland and South Platte Valley areas. 2013 was the first year for lower allocations in three of the District's six subareas.

- iv) **TBNRD:** Thorburn reported that TBNRD had 298,977 certified acres in the Platte Basin portion of the District. In 2013, TBNRD approved 16 certified irrigated acre transfers and 11 groundwater transfers. There were 76 well permits issued, most of which were replacement well permits, but also supplemental to surface water or supplemental to groundwater well permits. In addition to these management and monitoring activities, the TBNRD is also investing in projects that offset depletions to Platte River streamflows. There are 379 flow meters reporting to the TBNRD for approximately 44,500 acres. TBNRD has worked with NRCS on a few temporary retirements of irrigated land through the CRP and EQIP programs. TBNRD has completed a streamflow augmentation well in North Dry Creek which pumped 271 creditable acre-feet in 2013, and is preparing to drill a second augmentation well. Another source of depletion offset is provided by a discharge pipe running from an ethanol plant in Kearney County to the Platte River that provided 218 acre-feet in 2013. TBNRD also tracks conservation tillage practices throughout the District and reports that these practices are used on approximately 150,000 acres within the Platte Basin portion of the District. Agreements were made with Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District (CNPPID) and the DNR to use excess flow coming down the Platte River in the fall of 2013 and the spring of 2014 by diverting the excess water for groundwater recharge. TBNRD is a party to the J-2 Regulating Reservoir Project and had also made an agreement to compensate CPNRD for offsets provided by the operation of their canals in Dawson County.

- v) **TPNRD:** Dimmitt reported that in 2013, TPNRD had 320,896 certified irrigated acres, which was an increase of about 2,000 acres, most of which came out of CRP. The TPNRD approved 37 transfers involving 1,380 acres and an additional 42 acres that required additional offsets. The TPNRD's water bank accepted 165 acres, but it is expected that many of these will only remain there less than one year. TPNRD issued 28 replacement well permits, 17 new well permits, and three supplemental well permits. TPNRD continues to work with municipal and industrial users in the

establishment and maintenance of annual baselines, and all industrial users now have flow meters installed. TPNRD has also been involved in a number of streamflow accretion projects, including N-CORPE, and the diversion of excess flows for groundwater recharge.

c) Data, Information, Studies

i) Progress Toward Increment Goals (measuring the success of the IMPs)

- 1. Annual Review (DNR):** Wietjes reported on the “Report on the Depletions and Mitigations (Accretions) from 2013 Permitted Activities for Central Platte, North Platte, South Platte, Tri-Basin, and Twin Platte Natural Resources Districts for the 2014 Basin-Wide Meeting.” Due to the nature of the 2013 permits, there were no impacts from DNR permitted activities. The total net effect of the five Platte Basin NRD’s permitted activities for 2013 through the first increment was positive. The information in this report is also distributed to the PRRIP Governance Committee at the end of every year and these annual reports are available on the DNR’s website (<http://dnr.nebraska.gov/iwm/prrip-depletion>).
- 2. Robust Review – COHYST and WWUM**
 - a. Guidance Document for Annual and Robust Analyses:** The guidance document is available on the DNR’s website (<http://www.dnr.ne.gov/iwm/basin-wide-technical-committee-guidance-document>).
- 3. Projects**
 - a. N-CORPE (TPNRD):** Miller provided an update on the N-CORPE project, beginning with a project overview video that is available to the public (http://youtu.be/1EnMNY_9wxg). Miller reported that the approximately 10-mile project pipeline that will flow north, through the NPPD system and then to the Platte River, is scheduled for completion in 2015. Work is continuing with NPPD to finalize the agreements required to use their facilities. The pipeline capacity will be approximately 33 cubic feet per second (cfs). Miller referred to copies of a letter regarding the new \$10 occupation tax that was directly mailed to all of the owners of irrigated acres within the District at the end of 2013 (Attachment C). TPNRD believes that this direct mailing greatly eased the District’s implementation of the occupation tax and reported that the majority of landowners that called the office with questions or concerns were absentee landowners. Miller also indicated that copies of an updated N-CORPE FAQ sheet and the most recent TPNRD newsletter were available as handouts for the meeting attendees (included in Attachment C). The newsletter contains an item about the new automated platform for transferring certified irrigated acres. TPNRD believes that this platform will be much more convenient for the producers and will also save the TPNRD staff a significant amount of time.

- b. Cozad, Thirty Mile, and Orchard Alfalfa Canal Projects (CPNRD):** Vogt reported on three major canal projects that CPNRD has been coordinating and referred the attendees to the FAQ sheets provided for each project (Attachment D). Work on Cozad Canal began in spring 2012 and has cost approximately \$6.5 million, the cost being shared between CPNRD (20%), DNR (40%), NET funds (20%), and the Cozad Ditch Company (20%). The rededication of the Cozad Canal was on June 17, 2014, which was well attended. The Cozad project has the potential to provide 7,000 – 18,000 acre-feet (af) of water savings to the Platte River, annually. The Orchard-Alfalfa Canal rehabilitation began in 2013 and has cost approximately \$4.7 million, the cost being shared between CPNRD (20%), DNR (40%), NET funds (20%), and the Southside Irrigation Company (20%). This project will be able to provide 2,500 – 9,000 af of water back to the river each year and is estimated to be completed by the end of 2014. The Thirty Mile Canal rehabilitation was an approximately \$5 million project, the cost being shared between CPNRD (20%), DNR (40%), NET funds (20%), and the Thirty Mile Irrigation District (20%). This project should be completed by the end of June 2014 and a rededication will be held in August 2014. This project could potentially provide between 8,000 – 13,000 af per year of water savings to the Platte River.

For all three projects, the wide gap between estimated annual water savings is due to the fact that only natural flow, which varies considerably, can be returned to the Platte River, and also because the number of acres transferred back to the CPNRD varies from year to year. CPNRD is still in the process of working with DNR on the permitting process and currently has variances approved for the temporary transfer of these rights. Through the transfer process, only the historical consumptive use portion of the rights will be transferred to the Platte River as natural flow - the non-consumptive portion of the rights will remain in the canals. Vogt's report on the canal projects concluded with a discussion of water right ownership.

- c. Excess Flows/Intentional Recharge Projects, INSIGHT, and Small Water Bodies Analysis (DNR):** Schellpeper provided a presentation on a few of the projects occurring in the overappropriated portion of the Platte River Basin with the goal of returning it to fully appropriated status (<http://dnr.nebraska.gov/iwm/water-projects-for-the-platte-overappropriated-area-basin-wide-plan-and-integrated-management-plans>). Schellpeper discussed the current studies (Upper Platte Basin Conservation Measures Study, Post-1997 Depletions, and Difference Between Current and Fully Appropriated Levels of Development) and projects taking place in the Basin. The J-2 Regulating Reservoir Project is still underway. Two diversion of excess flow projects occurred over the last year: the fall 2013 project diverted excess flow from the Colorado

floods through canal systems along the South Platte River, and the spring 2014 project diverted excess flow from snowmelt into numerous recharge pits and into Elwood Reservoir. Next, Schellpeper discussed the recently completed analysis of new small water bodies (sand pits and small reservoirs) between 2005 and 2010 in the PRRIP area. DNR made an estimate of the difference in consumptive use between prior land cover and the new small water bodies. Overall, there was an estimated 678 af decrease in consumptive use due to the conversion of land in the PRRIP area to open water. The DNR does not issue storage permits for these small water bodies due to their size, which was one of the main reasons that this study was conducted.

Bradley provided a presentation and demonstration of INSIGHT, the DNR's new website that consolidates a large amount of data on water supply, demand, and use, into quick, easy to understand, graphs and figures. Data on the Upper Platte River Basin is not available on INSIGHT at the moment, but it is hoped that it will be added within the next year. Bradley provided a demonstration of how to use the INSIGHT website (<http://dnr.nebraska.gov/insight/>).

ii) Evaluating the Need for a Subsequent Increment

1. Identify the Difference between Over and Fully Appropriated

- a. **Conservation Measures Study (TBNRD):** Thorburn reported that the DNR and Platte Basin NRDs worked on a Phase I study on conservation measures and their impact on streamflow in the Platte River. The result of this study was a series of matrices that allow the members to better identify higher impact conservation measures. The report is available on the DNR's website (<http://dnr.nebraska.gov/iwm/final-technical-memorandum-on-conservation-study-for-the-platte-basin-coalition-the-flatwater-group-december-23-2013>). The members decided that it would not be appropriate to consider the option of moving ahead with a Phase II study until they have determined the appropriate method of identifying the difference between current and fully appropriated levels of development.
- b. **New FAB Evaluation Methodology (DNR):** Bradley explained that this item relates to the annual evaluation by which the DNR determines if a basin is fully or overappropriated. A consultant has made a recommendation as to how this methodology could be improved and the DNR is still in the process of having these rules formally adopted. Hearings on the new rules were held last year and the DNR is currently working to incorporate the feedback that they received from stakeholders at those hearings. The goal is to have the new rules in place within the next year. A survey has recently been sent out to approximately 100 stakeholders and the results of this survey will be analyzed in order to determine the next best steps.

- 4) **Review of Revisions to the Basin-Wide Plan or to Individual IMPs:** No revisions to the Basin-Wide Plan or to individual IMPs were made since the last annual Basin-Wide Plan meeting.
- 5) **Written Requests for Revisions to the Basin-Wide Plan or to Individual IMPs or Disputes:** Thorburn reported that the members of POAC did receive letters from the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission, CNPPID, and NPPD. The outgoing chairman, Rod Horn, replied to the concerns of these stakeholders through a written response. Copies of the correspondence are in Attachment E.
- 6) **Public Comment Period:** Public comments were made by the following meeting attendees:
- **Tom Schwarz:** Mr. Schwarz, from Bertrand, NE, is a surface water user who receives his water from the CNPPID and does not have access to an irrigation well. Because this is an allocation year, he is concerned that he will not have enough water for all of his land, despite the fact that users in the panhandle will have plenty. In the past, return flows would have provided central Nebraska users with enough water to irrigate their land, but policy changes or the past few years have changed this. Mr. Schwarz is very disappointed that DNR has not stood up for surface water users and would like the concerns of those downstream of Lake McConaughy to be better addressed by both the NRDs and the DNR.
 - **Mike Drain:** Mr. Drain, representing CNPPID, spoke on the three items that were previously outlined in two letters that CNPPID sent to members of POAC.
 - 1) Because there is not agreement between all parties, or the DNR and NRDs, on the preliminary estimate of historical streamflow reduction in the overappropriated portion of the Platte River, CNPPID believes that the group is statutorily obligated to notify the Governor of the disagreement and submit the issue to the Interrelated Water Review Board. The group is further violating the law by taking additional time not allowed by statute to work on this issue and by carrying out this work outside of the consultation and collaboration process required by statute.
 - 2) Inflows to Lake McConaughy continue to decline and CNPPID believes that this decline is due in part to the excessive groundwater pumping that occurs within the NPNRD. Increasingly, there is not enough inflow to Lake McConaughy to meet the demands of CNPPID's irrigation customers or to maintain hydropower production at a level that is profitable. CNPPID believes that the Basin-Wide Plan should lower allocations for groundwater pumping in the NPNRD in order to restore baseflow to the North Platte River.
 - 3) Lastly, CNPPID believes that it is time that the Basin-Wide Plan incorporate specific requirements for consultation and collaboration. In regard to the preliminary estimate of historical streamflow reduction, as a statutorily required component of the Basin-Wide Plan, its development should take place through a consultation and collaboration process. Even if the law does not specifically outline the extent to which consultation and collaboration should be included, it is common sense that the stakeholders should be involved in the discussions that will directly affect them.

CNPPID asks that direct involvement of stakeholders in the consultation and collaboration process be incorporated into the Basin-Wide Plan.

- **Jeff Shafer:** Mr. Shafer, representing NPPD, thanked the group for the opportunity to comment in writing and in person. Shafer noted that the NPPD staff have a great amount of water resources experience and that NPPD can make a positive contribution if allowed to consult and collaborate throughout the process, rather than just at the end of the process.
- **Scott Olson:** Mr. Olson, a director at CNPPID, provided his perspective as a lifetime resident of the Central Platte region. If the inflows to Lake McConaughy are lost, the region will lose the economic benefits for which the producers invested in and built the reservoir and associated infrastructure in the first place. Mr. Olson would like the group to consider how their decisions directly impact the people that live and work in this area.
- **John Thorburn** thanked Rod Horn for his chairmanship of the POAC over the last year.

7) Meeting Summary

a) **Action Items:** None

b) **Schedule Next Annual Meeting:** The 2015 Annual Meeting for the Upper Platte Basin-Wide Plan will be on June 18, 2015, at 1:00 p.m. CDT, at the TPNRD office in North Platte, NE.

UPPER PLATTE BASIN-WIDE ANNUAL MEETING

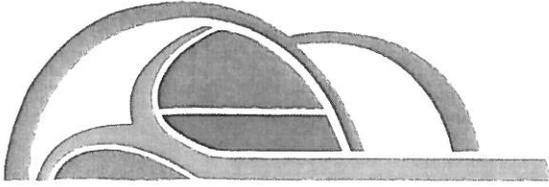
Meeting Date: June 19, 2014

Place/Room: Tri-Basin NRD Office, Holdrege, NE

Name:	Representing:	E-Mail:
Melissa Mosier	NONR	melissa.mosier@neb.gov
Jeff Shafer	NPPID	jtshafe@nppd.com
Ann Dimmitt	TPNRD	afisher@tpnrd.org
Mike Drain	CNPPID	mdrain@cnppid.com
Dustin Wilcox	NARD	dwilcox@NRDNET.ORG
Ryan Reisdorf	SPNRD	rreisdorf@spnrd.org
Travis Glanz	SPNRD	tglanz@spnrd.org
Gene Zuelin	NGPC	gene.zuelin@nebraska.gov
Frank Albrecht	NGPC	frank.albrecht@ " "
Sheila Kuntz		
Scott Olsen		
Milt Dahlgren		milt.dahlgren@gmail.com
Larry Reynolds		larryreynolds68@aig.com
Greg Heiden		hydraulicman@atcjet.net
Jerry Kenny	PRRIP	Kennyj@headwaterscorp.com
John T. Heaston	The Nature Conservancy	jheaston@tnc.org
Lyndon Vogt	CPNRD	vogt@cpnrd.org
MESSE MENTKEN	CPNRD	mintken@cpnrd.org
Tom Schwarz	Self	tl.schwarz@charter.net

AGENDA
PLATTE RIVER BASIN-WIDE PLAN
June 19th, 2014 1:00 p.m. CDT
Tri-Basin Natural Resources District office,
1723 Burlington St., Holdrege, Nebraska

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Review Agenda & Meeting Procedures
- 3) Monitoring & Management Actions
 - a) DNR Report
 - b) NRD Reports
 - i) CPNRD
 - ii) NPNRD
 - iii) SPNRD
 - iv) TBNRD
 - v) TPNRD
 - c) Data, Information, Studies
 - i) Progress Toward Increment Goals (measuring the success of the IMPs)
 1. Annual Review
 2. Robust Review – COHYST and WWUM
 - a. Guidance Document for Annual and Robust Analyses - <http://dnr.nebraska.gov/iwm/basin-wide-technical-committee-guidance-document>
 3. Projects
 - a. N-CORPE – Video and Presentation (TPNRD)
 - b. Cozad, Thirty Mile, and Orchard Alfalfa Canal Projects - Presentation (CPNRD)
 - c. Excess Flows/Intentional Recharge Projects, INSIGHT, and Small Water Bodies Analysis - Presentation (DNR)
 - ii) Evaluating the Need for a Subsequent Increment
 - a. Identify the Difference between Over and Fully Appropriated
 - i. Conservation Measures Study - Presentation (TBNRD)
 - ii. New FAB Evaluation Methodology
- 4) Review of Revisions to the Basin-Wide Plan or to Individual IMPs
- 5) Written Requests for Revisions to the Basin-Wide Plan or to Individual IMPs or Disputes
- 6) Public Comment Period
- 7) Meeting Summary
 - a) Action Items
 - b) Schedule Next Annual Meeting



TWIN PLATTE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

October 18, 2013

TO: Irrigated Landowners in the Twin Platte Natural Resources District (TPNRD)
FROM: Ann Dimmitt, Integrated Management Plan (IMP) Manager
SUBJECT: TPNRD Occupation Tax

On September 12, 2013, the TPNRD Board of Directors approved a resolution setting the 2013 occupation tax at \$10.00 per irrigated acre. All owners of irrigated lands within the TPNRD will be receiving a occupation tax statement from the county in which the land is located.

The TPNRD will use the funds from the occupation tax for its share of the Nebraska Cooperative Republican Platte Enhancement Project (N-CORPE). The N-CORPE project will provide water to the Platte River to assist with carrying out the TPNRD Integrated Management Plan (IMP). The TPNRD IMP requires water to be added to the Platte River or the implementation of regulatory actions.

The IMP was required by Nebraska law, and was jointly developed by the TPNRD and the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, following numerous meetings with stakeholders between 2005 and 2009. The Platte River Basin within the TPNRD is over appropriated and the TPNRD is required to incrementally achieve and sustain a fully appropriated condition. Within the first ten year increment of this IMP (2009-2019), the TPNRD has to address impacts of stream flow depletions to surface water appropriations from ground water wells constructed after July 1, 1997. The IMP, the Rules and Regulations, and the Board meeting minutes, can be viewed on the TPNRDs website at www.tpnrd.org.

The stakeholders recommended to the Board of Directors that the TPNRD avoid regulatory actions. The N-CORPE project, and other projects that will be funded by property tax funds, allow the TPNRD to execute the recommendations of the stakeholders.

Enclosed for your information is a fact sheet about the N-CORPE project, a list of answers for frequently asked questions, and a timeline of developments and activities beginning in 2002.

If you have questions, please call me at 308-535-8080, email me at afisher@tpnrd.org, or visit the office.



N-CORPE

Nebraska Cooperative Republican Platte Enhancement

September 30, 2013



Natural Resource Districts (NRDs) in all or parts of Platte and Republican River Basins in Nebraska have determined that the Nebraska Cooperative Republican Platte Enhancement Project (N-CORPE) is a cost-effective way to aid and protect the Republican and Platte Rivers, the tax base and agricultural economy of the region, and taxpayers statewide by ensuring long-term compliance with interstate water agreements and Nebraska required Integrated Management Plans.

WHAT: In December, four of Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts purchased 19,500 acres in Lincoln County, Nebraska, that lie squarely between the Platte and Republican Rivers. About 15,800 of those acres have been irrigated. Ceasing irrigation of those acres will allow water that otherwise would have been used for irrigation to be stored in the underlying Ogallala Aquifer. The stored water can then be piped from approximately 30 groundwater wells into the Republican and Platte Rivers when needed to meet river flow obligations. The total capacity of the project will be in excess of 15,000 acre feet annually, though a portion of the available water may not be needed on an annual basis and would be "banked" for use in years when needed. There is an abundant supply of groundwater underlying the property purchased by the NRDs – the saturated thickness of the Ogallala Aquifer in the area is approximately 400-600 feet. Under N-CORPE, water that otherwise would have been irrigated on and consumed by corn and other crops will instead be piped into the Republican and Platte Rivers when needed to meet river flow requirements.

WHO: The four N-CORPE members that formed an inter-local agency are: Upper Republican NRD based in Imperial; Middle Republican NRD based in Curtis; Lower Republican NRD based in Alma; and the Twin Platte NRD, based in North Platte. The N-CORPE project fits the mission of the individual NRDs to balance environmental, economic, and, in the case of interstate water agreements, legal objectives tied to water supplies. Each NRD has an equal share in the agreement.

WHY: A state law passed in 2004 required NRDs in the upper Platte Basin in Nebraska to impose moratoriums on new groundwater irrigated acres in a large stretch of the river that was deemed over-appropriated which is having an imbalance between water supplies and demands. NRDs in the over-appropriated area initially have to return the Platte River to 1997 conditions and, ultimately, a fully appropriated condition. In the Twin Platte NRD, the requirement to return to 1997 conditions as spelled out in an integrated management plan it has with the state to begin placing 5,859 acre feet of offset water annually into the Platte by the end of 2013 and increases to 7,700 acre feet annually in 50 years. Related, is an agreement between Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service aimed at protecting federally endangered species which requires Nebraska to return the Platte to 1997 conditions. The agreement also sets requirements for new water annually of 130,000 acre feet during the first increment of the agreement which could increase in subsequent increments to over 400,000 acre feet of new water annually in the critical habitat area of the Platte River.

The Republican River dissects the southwestern and south-central parts of the state. Its use is dictated by a 70-year-old interstate water compact between Kansas, Nebraska and Colorado that the State of Kansas has used to initiate litigation in recent years. Kansas has sought a permanent shutdown of groundwater irrigation on 300,000 acres in Nebraska, or about ¼ of all groundwater irrigated acres in Nebraska's part of the Republican Basin. This proposed remedy has not been acceptable to residents of Nebraska and a draft recommendation recently issued by the Special Master appointed by the U.S. Supreme Court doesn't recommend that remedy be imposed. The NRDs in the Republican Basin have long imposed water restrictions to reduce consumptive use of water, and development of new groundwater-irrigated acres is prohibited. All irrigation wells in the Basin are metered and annually checked by NRD employees to document water usage to ensure compliance with water-use restrictions. Additionally, millions of dollars have been spent to permanently retire some irrigated acres that have substantial impacts on stream flow. Unlike obligations in the Platte,

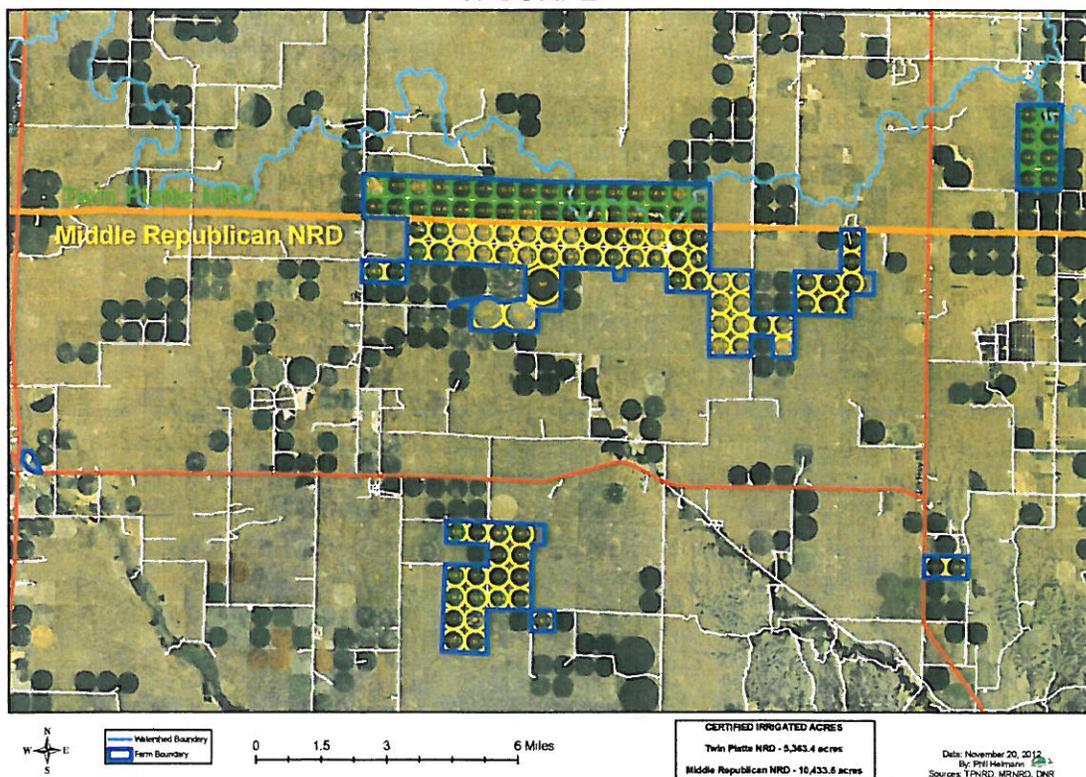
NRDs in the Republican Basin won't have to use the project annually to increase river flows. It will only be used during exceptionally dry times when needed to offset depletions to stream flow caused by groundwater pumping in Nebraska's portion of the Basin. The pipeline to the Republican Basin will be constructed first; it's expected that the main pipeline will have a 42-inch diameter and be approximately six miles long. Water will be delivered to Medicine Creek, whose confluence with the Republican River is located near Cambridge.

WHERE: The 19,500 acres purchased by N-CORPE are located in Lincoln County, approximately 15 miles south of North Platte. The majority of the property is adjacent to, and in some cases intersects, the surface water divide between the Platte and Republican Basins. Approximately 10,400 of the formerly irrigated acres are located in the Middle Republican NRD; the remaining 5,400 acres are in the Twin Platte NRD.

PROJECT FUNDING: The total estimated cost of the project including land and construction costs is an estimated \$120 million - \$130 million. The project will be paid for using an occupation tax on irrigated acres which can be up to \$10 an acre. The four NRDs that are a part of the N-CORPE group, are the Upper Republican NRD, Middle Republican NRD, Lower Republican NRD, and Twin Platte NRD will each levy the occupation tax.

WHEN: The goal is to have the project operational in 2014, with the portion of the project benefitting the Republican Basin constructed first.

Nebraska Cooperative Republican Platte Enhancement Project N-CORPE



(The navy blue line outlines the N-CORPE property. The light blue line is the Platte Basin/Republican Basin boundary. The orange line is the Twin Platte NRD and Middle Republican NRD boundary. The green line outlines certified irrigated acres in the Twin Platte NRD and the yellow line outlines certified irrigated acres in the Middle Republican NRD.)

For More Information Visit:
<http://www.mrnrd.org/n-corpe.html>

Lower Republican NRD
www.lnrnd.org

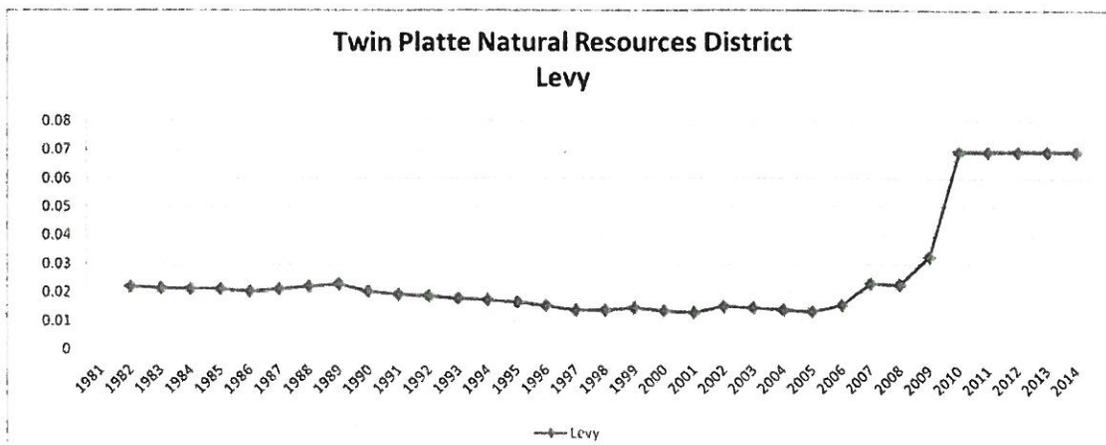
Middle Republican NRD
www.mrnrd.org

Twin Platte NRD
www.tpnrd.org

Upper Republican NRD
www.urnrd.org

Frequently Asked Questions about the Occupation Tax & N-CORPE Project

- Why have I never heard of the TPNRD or any of this before now? There have been many opportunities for residents to have known during the last 10 years. Since the Water Policy Task Force presented recommendations to the Nebraska Legislature in December 2003, there have been eight TPNRD Public Hearings, 120 TPNRD Public Board Meetings, 10 TPNRD newsletters, as well as information in the news media in regard to the TPNRD Integrated Management Plan.
- Why a project like this now? This property is located where the water could be used to offset to the Platte River and the Republican River.
- If I do not own irrigated crop ground, how will this affect me? If you do not own irrigated crop ground you will not pay any new taxes for this project. An occupation tax will be used to fund this project.
- How does an occupation tax work if I own irrigated acres? The 2013 occupation tax will be assessed on any ground water acres that were certified as irrigated in 2013 with the TPNRD. It will also be assessed on any acres irrigated by surface water determined by the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources Irrigation Canal agreements. The occupation tax is similar to real estate taxes in that they are collected after the use. Statements for the 2013 irrigation season will go out in early December 2013.
- The mechanism to pay for this project is through an occupation tax on irrigated land within the TPNRD. How many acres does that mean? There are 343,156 irrigated acres in the TPNRD. This includes both surface water (24,295) and ground water (318,861) irrigated acres. These acres alone will be charged the \$10 occupation tax to pay for this project.
- I have heard that the TPNRD taxes have increased in the past few years. Is this true? Are they still going up? Beginning in 2006, the TPNRD taxes have gone up. All of the increases in your taxes have been related to the Integrated Management Plan. Prior to 2006 the TPNRD had one of the lowest tax rates of the NRDs. See the chart below.



- **NRD officials say this will help with state regulation compliance. Why is this necessary? Have all other mechanisms been exhausted? What are those mechanisms?** LB 962 required NRDs in the over appropriated areas of the Platte Basin to return the Platte River to a fully appropriated condition. The mechanism to change the requirements for the TPNRD Integrated Management Plan is a change in state laws. The mechanism to change the requirements for the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program is a change in federal environmental laws.

The TPNRD is cooperating with the other NRDs in the over appropriated Platte River Basin for developing the method for determining the amount of offset water that would need to be placed in the Platte River that has been lost due to ground water usage and would return the river to fully appropriated.

- **Why does this N-CORPE (Nebraska Cooperative Republican Platte Enhancement Project) feel like it has been rushed along?** Board members in the TPNRD have been aware of the requirements of the Integrated Management Plan for ten years and throughout those ten years have determined priorities working with the public. The Board has been working to insure the least impact for the agriculture producers and the economy of the area that is directly related to agriculture. For some people who were not aware of the issues faced by the TPNRD, it may feel like it has been rushed, but those aware of the issues understand the complexity of the situation. Every TPNRD Board meeting is legal noticed in the paper and the public is welcome to attend.
- **How will the ground be used or what will become of the land?** A large portion of the N-CORPE property has already been seeded to a cover crop. Over the next 2-3 years native vegetation will be planted into the existing cover crops. The ultimate plan is for the grounds to be returned to native vegetation for livestock grazing. The final decision of what to do will be made jointly by the four NRDs.
- **Will the NRDs use existing wells or drill new wells?** Initially 30 existing wells will be used to deliver water to the pipelines when needed. Ultimately the existing wells not being used will be converted to livestock wells, converted to monitoring wells, or decommissioned. Engineering and ground water modeling have occurred for the design of this project.
- **Will there be a pipeline built? Will it be above ground or below?** There will be pipelines built to the Platte River and the Republican River. The pipeline to the Republican River will be built first, and is expected to be completed by late 2013 or early 2014. The specifics of the size, location, and length have not been determined at this time for the pipeline going north to the Platte River.
- **When will the NRDs provide more information for the public?** Information will be provided as it becomes available. The public will be made aware of happenings through news releases, newsletters, public meetings, and the NRD websites. There is a link from the Middle Republican Natural Resources District's website at <http://www.mrnrd.org/n-corpe.html>.

Integrated Management Plan (IMP) 2002 to Present

2002-2003 Water Policy Task Force

The Nebraska Legislature in 2002 mandated that the Governor appoint a Water Policy Task Force with directions to present a recommendation to the Legislature by the 2004 Legislative Session. The Governor appointed a 49 member Water Policy Task Force, which held numerous public meetings prior to presenting a recommendation to the Legislature in December 2003.

2004 LB 962

During the 2004 Legislative Session, the Legislature enacted the Water Policy Task Force recommendations in Legislative Bill 962.

LB 962 directed that the Platte River Basin west of Elm Creek be designated over appropriated, which required the NRDs in the Platte River Basin west of Elm Creek to impose moratoriums on new ground water wells and increases in irrigated acres within the over appropriated areas. Over appropriated is when the surface water rights are using all of the river flows available and ground water uses are reducing the river flows.

LB 962 directed that the NRDs in the Platte River Basin west of Elm Creek and the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources jointly prepare Integrated Management Plans. NRDs in the over appropriated areas during the first ten year increment have to return the Platte River to 1997 conditions and to ultimately return the Platte River to a fully appropriated condition.

2005-2009 Stakeholder Consultation – IMP Development

From 2005 up until the approval of the Integrated Management Plan in 2009, a group of 20 stakeholders representing water users in the TPNRD met monthly with the TPNRD Water Resources Subcommittee and representatives from the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources to provide recommendations for the TPNRD Integrated Management Plan. The Stakeholders consistently recommended that the TPNRD find offset water and not implement regulations for ground water users. The stakeholders agreed that regulations would be costly for the TPNRD to implement and very costly for the ground water irrigators.

2009 September 15 – Effective Date for IMP

The TPNRD and the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources jointly held a public hearing on the jointly prepared Integrated Management Plan for the TPNRD on July 2, 2009.

2004-2009 Ground Water Management Area (going on simultaneously with IMP development) Progression of Restrictions in the TPNRD

2004 July 1

TPNRD temporary suspension on drilling new wells began for the area within 28%/40 year SDF line.

2004 September 15

NE DNR Order – Platte Basin designated as over appropriated above Kearney Canal diversion for area within 28%/40 year COHYST line – additional lands within the TPNRD became subject to stays on new wells and stays on increases in irrigated acres.

2006 February 24

Ground Water Management Area became effective for the entire TPNRD which established a stay on the issuance of high capacity water well construction permits for the entire TPNRD.

2007 June 18

A stay on the use of an existing water well to increase the number of acres historically irrigated became effective for the entire TPNRD.

2009 September 15 - Effective date of the IMP

- Effective date of the IMP – stakeholders assisted in developing the IMP with the TPNRD & Nebraska Department of Natural Resources
- Goal – achieve & sustain fully appropriated condition in the Platte River
- 1st step – return river to 1997 levels (TPNRD obligation is 7,700 ac-ft)
- 2nd step – return to fully appropriated condition (incrementally – 10 year steps – must move forward)
- Trigger Points in the IMP:
 - 2012 – 5,804 ac-ft annually – *TPNRD exceeded this trigger due to temporary and short term projects*
 - 2019 – end of December – 6,185 ac-ft annually
 - 2043-2048 - 7,700 ac-ft annually

2003-2012

Since the Water Policy Task Force presented recommendations to the Nebraska Legislature in December 2003, there have been eight TPNRD Public Hearings, 120 TPNRD Public Board Meetings, 10 TPNRD newsletters, and numerous news articles in regard to the TPNRD Integrated Management Plan.

2013 March 14 – Effective Date of the Revisions to the IMP

The TPNRD Board of Directors held a public hearing on January 10, 2013. The only revision was the addition of the authority to use an occupation tax.

2013 September 12 – Occupation Tax Set

The TPNRD Board of Directors set the occupation tax at \$10/irrigated acre.

2013 December

Occupation tax statements mailed to landowners.

Natural Resources News



March 2014

Vol. 29

www.tpnrd.org

A New Automated Platform Launches for Transferring Certified Irrigated Acres in the Twin Platte NRD

The Twin Platte Natural Resources District (TPNRD) has been working closely with Mammoth Trading, a private company, to develop an automated trading platform for transferring certified irrigated acres. Mammoth Trading matches buyers and sellers of certified irrigated acres with a system that is anonymous and confidential. Unlike an auction, this platform simultaneously compares all bids and offers in the market, making transfers easier to happen between buyers and sellers. Mammoth Trading is a neutral market manager: it does not speculate in the market it manages, but instead helps to facilitate the best set of transactions in the market. It treats buyers and sellers equally and splits the gains from transfers between both sides. If they can't meet or beat the price you want, they won't transfer acres for you. Mammoth Trading manages the approval process with the TPNRD on their customers' behalf to make sure that bids and offers follow all TPNRD rules, and that changes in irrigation practices are acceptable.

A summary of how the Mammoth Trading market works:

- Contact them and tell them what you want to do. Their staff will talk to you about the kinds of practices that will work for the approval process, and collect information needed to construct a bid to buy or an offer to sell.
- If you are a buyer, you'll give the maximum price you want to pay per certified acre, which will include all fees associated with the transaction (e.g., title search, notarization of documents, Mammoth Trading's fee, TPNRD fees). If you are a seller, you'll give the minimum price you're willing to accept per certified acre, again inclusive of all fees associated with the transaction. Mammoth Trading keeps all bids and offers anonymous and confidential.
- Next, they'll send you a completed bidding form and a contract to sign, contingent on finding matches that meet or beat your price and contingent on approval by the TPNRD. If you change your mind about your bid, let them know and they can make whatever adjustments you want.
- The market is open now, and runs monthly through April. On April 1st, they will clear the next market cycle and figure out the best possible matches, taking into account everyone's bids and offers, as well as TPNRD rules (such as flow lines, stream depletion factors, slope, closeness to villages, and so on).
- They'll then let you know if your bid or offer has been accepted. If it has, they'll send a completed transfer application that you need to sign and send to the TPNRD, together with a lienholders' consent form (if it's needed). Mammoth Trading will undertake the title search on your behalf.
- Once the TPNRD approves your transfer, Mammoth Trading will work with you on the final paperwork and transfer funds to complete the transaction.



**MAMMOTH
TRADING**

Continued on Page 2

Continued From Page 1

A New Automated Platform Launches for Transferring Certified Irrigated Acres in the Twin Platte NRD

The first round of the certified acre market is open now! For more information on how the market works, placing bids or offers, or if you have any other questions, please call Richael Young at (308) 520-9296, email her at richael@mammothtrading.com, or visit the website at mammothtrading.com



The TPNRD does not require you to use this service to complete a transfer of certified irrigated acres.

WILD Nebraska Habitat Program

Landowners with acres they want to enhance for wildlife should consider the WILD Nebraska program. The program provides attractive cost-sharing on improvements such as grass seedings and/or shrub plantings. Other types of enhancements are also available. Hunting access is not required on enrolled acres. Contact the Twin Platte Natural Resources District office in North Platte for more information about WILD Nebraska and other habitat programs.



Status Update on the N-CORPE

(Nebraska Cooperative Republican Platte Enhancement) Project

Construction of a pipeline to convey water to the Platte River for the N-CORPE project is in the beginning phase.

The TPNRD has entered into an Interlocal Cooperation Agreement, with the Upper Republican Natural Resources District, the Middle Republican Natural Resources District, and the Lower Republican Natural Resources District, which provided for the creation, governance, and operation of the N-CORPE project.

The N-CORPE project owns and operates lands in southern Lincoln County consisting of approximately 19,500 acres of agricultural real estate and water transmission and distribution facilities. The N-CORPE project is to regulate/manage water to assist the State of Nebraska with compliance with the Republican River Compact, and to assist with implementation of TPNRD's Integrated Management Plan and the State of Nebraska's responsibilities under the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program.

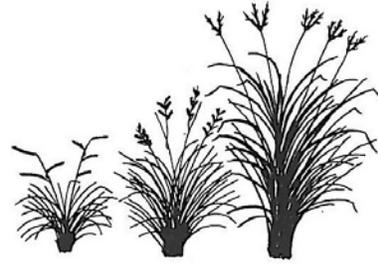
The project consists of a well field and pipelines to convey water to the Platte River and the Republican River. The well field is nearing completion and the pipeline south to the Republican River is completed. The pipeline north to the Platte River is scheduled for construction in calendar year 2014.

The cost of the well field is shared equally by all four NRDs. The cost of the construction of the south pipeline is shared only by the three Republican NRDs. The cost of the construction of the north pipeline is paid for by the TPNRD.

AWARD WINNERS!

Congratulations to the winners of the

**2013 GRASSLAND AWARD FOR LINCOLN—
MCPHERSON COUNTIES** — Brosius Ranch —
Robert & Jennifer Brosius & Family



2013 TREE AWARD FOR KEITH—ARTHUR COUNTIES — Spurgin Family Farm
— Gerald & Jan Spurgin & Family



The Twin Platte Natural Resources District is proud to honor producers who go the extra mile while taking care of our natural resources for the next generation; it is never easy but the rewards are many. To those of you who have received one of our awards before, and to the above families, we are glad to honor your hard work and dedication. Thank you!

2014 Chemigation Permits

Chemigation permit holders from 2013 in the Twin Platte Natural Resources District will automatically be sent 2014 chemigation permits for each location they had permitted last year. Those permits should be arriving in mailboxes on March 1st or shortly thereafter. The deadline for returning a renewal permit to our office with the \$10 renewal fee is Monday June 2, 2014. Contact our office with any chemigation questions, or to request a new permit. Also check the calendar page in this newsletter for remaining chemigation certification dates in our area.

The Nebraska Buffer Strip Program

Applications are being accepted by the Twin Platte Natural Resources District for the Nebraska Buffer Strip Program. Annual payments up to \$225 per acre are available in the program. Buffer strips, or filter strips, are areas planted to grasses at a width of 20 to 120 feet, and sometimes wider. Grasses are planted between cropland and waterways since they are effective at filtering sediment and other pollutants that could otherwise reach surface water. Buffer strips can be placed next to seasonal or perennial streams, wetlands, and ponds. Intermittent drainage ways through cropped fields also qualify. Wider “riparian forest buffers” are another program option, where trees are planted in the grass filter strips. Dryland or irrigated cropland is eligible for enrollment. The landowner can choose from five to ten year agreement lengths. Contact the Twin Platte Natural Resources District office for more information about this program.



Twin Platte Natural Resources District

<u>Board of Directors</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Sub-District</u>
Dennis Schilz (Chairperson)	13-16	5
Doug Stack (Vice-Chairperson)	11-14	3
Jerry Weaver (Secretary)	13-16	3
Jim Meisner (Treasurer)	11-14	5
Robert L Petersen	13-16	2
Joe Wahlgren	11-14	2
Shane Storer	13-16	1
Dale Margritz	13-14	4
Bob Wiseman	13-16	4
Eric Hansen	11-14	1
John Williams	11-14	At-Large

<u>Staff Members</u>	<u>Position</u>
Kent O. Miller, P.E.....	General Manager
Dave Slattery.....	Conservation Programs Coordinator
Bill Carhart.....	Grasslands Stewardship Coordinator
Glen Bowers.....	Water Programs Field Coordinator
Ann Dimmitt.....	IMP Manager
Landon Shaw.....	Hydrologist
Phil Heimann.....	GIS Coordinator
Amy Mapes.....	Administrative Assistant
Noelle Turner....	Field Office Secretary, North Platte NRCS
Jessica Milby....	Range Programs Tech, North Platte NRCS

Natural Resources News is the official publication of the Twin Platte Natural Resources District. If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, or would like to be placed on our mailing list, please feel free to submit them to:

Twin Platte Natural Resources District
 C/O Ann Dimmitt, IMP Manager
 P.O. Box 1347
 North Platte, NE 69103-1347
 Phone: (308)535-8080
 e-mail: afisher@tpnrd.org

Are you looking to sell extra certified irrigated acres or do you need a few more to complete your pivot???



Call or e-mail Mammoth Trading and see if they can help you.

**Don't Forget to Water Trees
 Going into Spring**

Give your trees an important shot in the limb by watering them going into spring. Recently with the continued dry winter conditions, many trees will need a drink of water this spring. A good goal is to water the trees for several hours once or twice every week when the ground is thawed.



Upcoming Events:

March

- 4 Chemigation Training @ UN-WCREC 1:30 pm CT
- 13 Board of Director's Meeting - 3:00 pm CT*

April

- 10 Board of Director's Meeting - 7:30 pm CT*
- 25 Arbor Day Observed—Office Closed



May

- 8 Chemigation Training @ UN-WCREC 1:30 pm CT
- 8 Board of Director's Meeting - 7:30 pm CT*
- 26 Memorial Day Observed—Office Closed

* Board Meetings are held in the Great Western Bank Center-North Platte

TWIN PLATTE

NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
 PO Box 1347
 111 South Dewey Street, 2nd Floor
 North Platte, NE 69103-1347

U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 NON-PROFIT
 ORGANIZATION
 PERMIT NO. 107
 NORTH PLATTE, NE
 69101

Postal Patron



COZAD IRRIGATION CANAL



Photo: Taken in 1925 at the Diversion Point of Cozad Canal. The canal has been in place & diverting Platte River water since its water right was approved by the state 120 years ago.



Channel of canal prior to rehab.



Channel of canal after rehab.

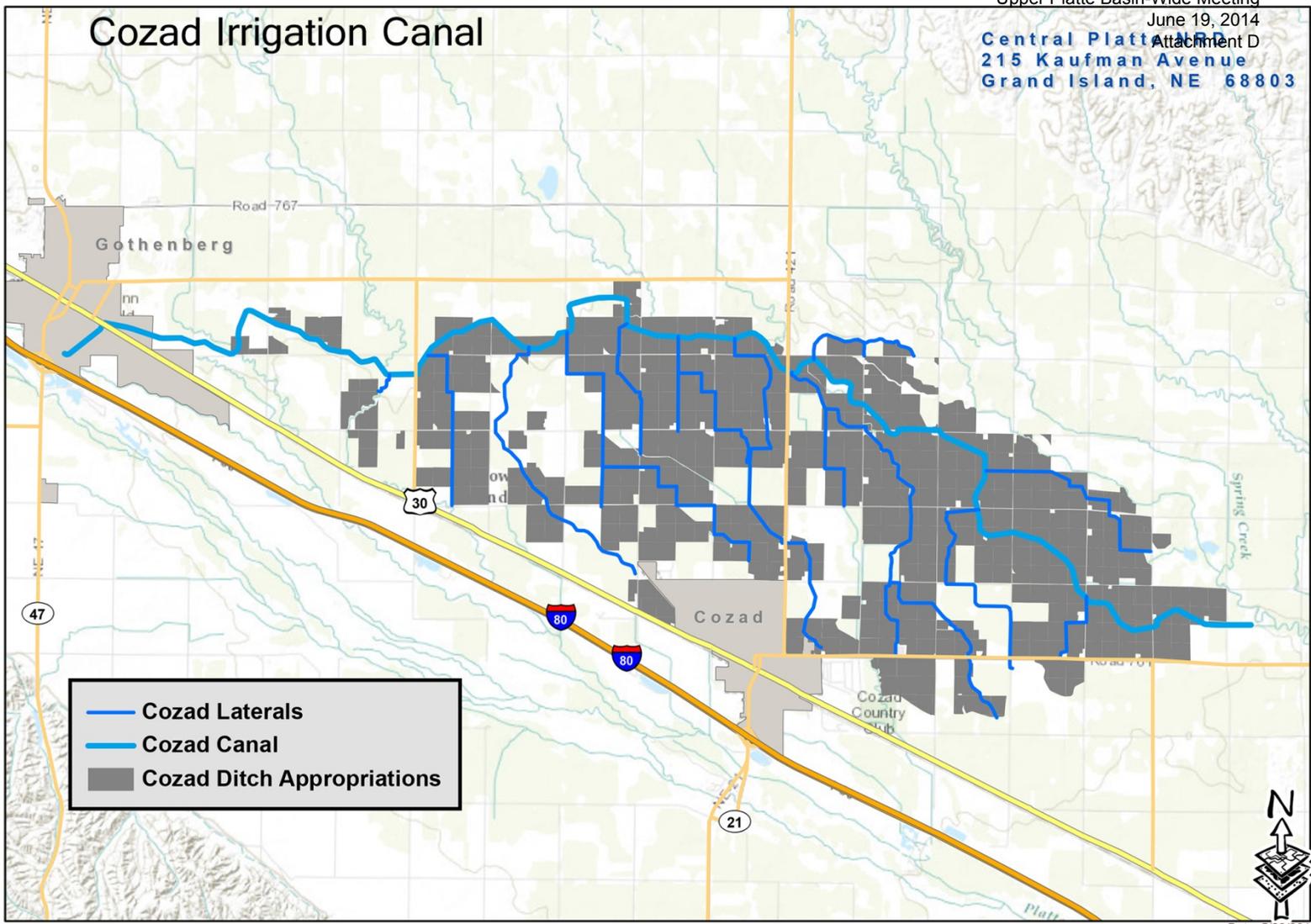
The Central Platte Natural Resources District and Cozad Ditch Company partnered in March of 2012 to create a more efficient irrigation system. Completed in three phases and only two years, this massive project included:

- 152 acres of clearing & grubbing, which equals 27 miles
- 21 miles of grading
- 13 new structures: included 4 farm crossings, 6 check structures, 1 underdrain structure, 1 siphon, and 1 county road wing wall replacement.
- River Return Structure
- Spring Creek Wasteway Structure: excavation of Spring Creek Channel (1,415 LF), 22 walkway modifications/extensions, and a SCADA automated monitoring system of the Rubicon Gates which includes 4 flume gates and 7 slip meters.

PROJECT FUNDING	
Platte Basin Habitat Enhancement Project	
Nebraska Department of Natural Resources	40%
Nebraska Environmental Trust	20%
Central Platte Natural Resources District-	40%
Cozad Ditch will reimburse NRD @ 20%	
PROJECT COST	\$6,596,860.08
<i>Project loans provided by Five Points Bank of Grand Island, NE. Engineering Firm- Olsson Associates of Grand Island, NE.</i>	



Cozad Irrigation Canal



Benefits Provided by Project:

- Groundwater recharge that enhances surface & groundwater supplies and protects water quality.
- Enhanced flows to the Platte River by diverting and retiming excess flows to the river.
- Enhanced flows to the Platte River by returning natural flow irrigation rights to the river.
- Helps meet requirements of the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (PRRIP) agreement between Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska, and the U.S. government.
- Helps meet the requirements of LB 962 to return the Platte River to its 1997 level of use (3,400 acre-feet). This project has the potential to provide 7,000 to 18,000 ac/ft of water savings annually; which will also help the CPNRD get closer to a fully appropriated status.

The canal has been in place since its water right was approved in 1894; with water rights to irrigate over 25,000 acres of land in the area between Gothenburg and Lexington in Dawson County.

The NRD negotiated a lease of 117.22 cubic feet per second (cfs) of water from Cozad Ditch Company that was previously used for irrigation by landowners, who were serviced by the canal & now use groundwater.



ORCHARD ALFALFA CANAL



The Orchard Alfalfa Canal has been in place since its water right was approved in 1898; with water rights to irrigate 4,326 acres of land. The Central Platte NRD and Southside Irrigation Company signed a management-lease agreement in 2012. As part of the agreement, the CPNRD assists in operations for all of the irrigation district's benefits, pay half of the operations and maintenance costs, and get half of the revenues.

Construction began in 2013 and included:

- Phase I: replacement of 7 county road box culverts;
- Phase II: 51 acres of clearing & grubbing; 60,200 LF of grading; irrigation turnout structure; replacement of 13 canal structures; removal of 3 farm crossings;
- Phase III: replacement of diversion structure; installation of slide gate with electric actuators on existing overflow structure; rip rap overflow structure for high flows.

PROJECT FUNDING

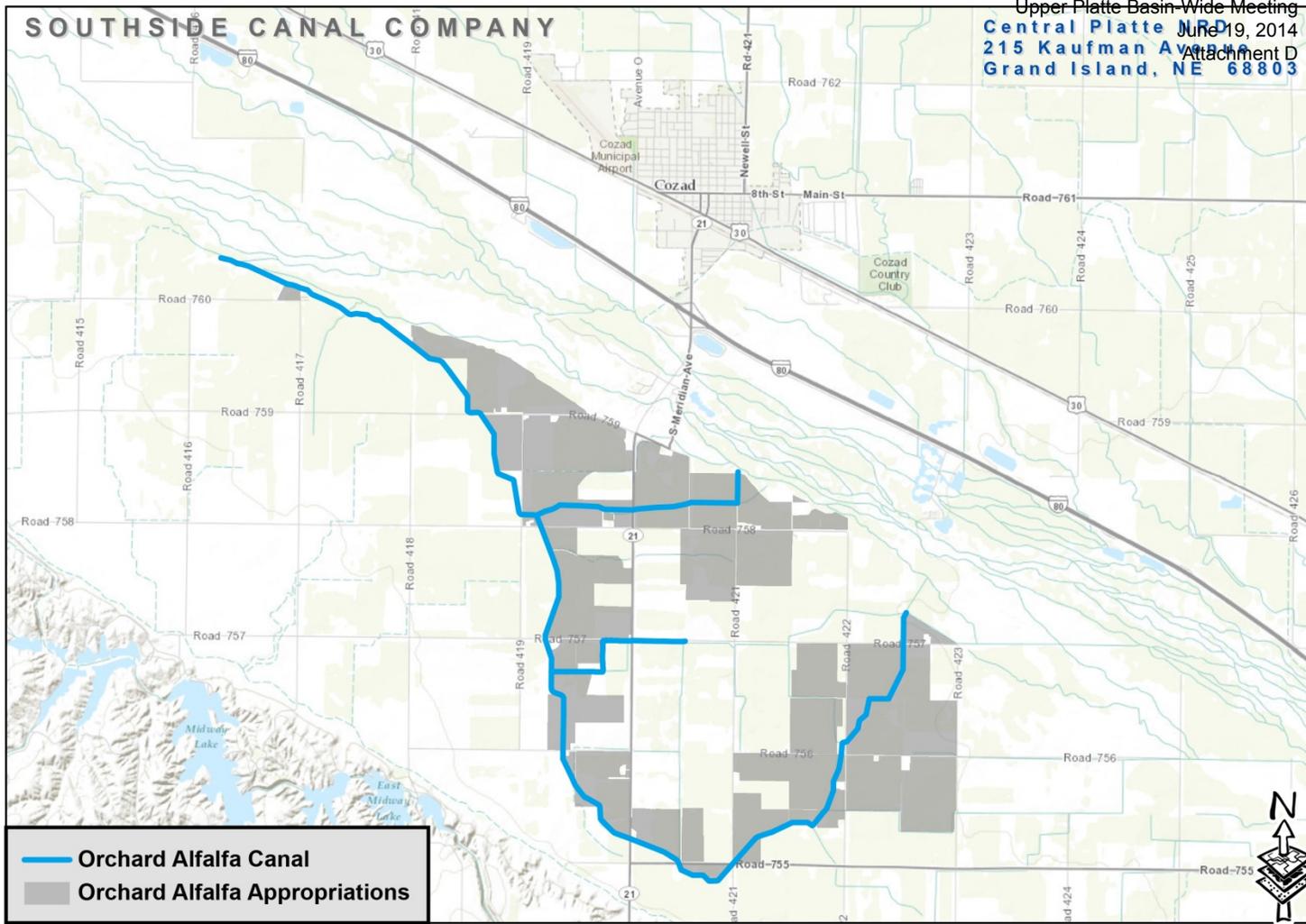
Platte Basin Habitat Coalition Project

Nebraska Department of Natural Resources	40%
Nebraska Environmental Trust	20%
Central Platte Natural Resources District-	40%
Southside Irrigation Company will reimburse NRD @ 20%	

PROJECT COST

Project loans provided by Five Points Bank of Grand Island, NE. \$4,691,588.72





Project Benefits

- Provides groundwater recharge that enhances surface and groundwater supplies and protects water quality.
- Provides enhanced flows to the Platte River by diverting and retiming excess flows to the river.
- Provides enhanced flows to the Platte River by returning natural flow irrigation rights to the river.
- Helps meet requirements of the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (PRRIP) agreement between Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska, and the U.S. government.
- Helps meet the requirements of LB 962 to return the Platte River to its 1997 level of use (3,400 acre-feet). This project has the potential to provide 2,500 to 9,900 ac/ft of water savings annually; which will also help the CPNRD get closer to a fully appropriated status.

The Southside Irrigation Company is currently taking steps to become an irrigation district. Irrigation districts are political subdivisions of the State of Nebraska.



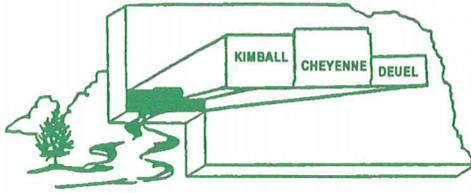
THIRTY MILE IRRIGATION

The Thirty Mile Canal was originally dedicated on July 13, 1928 with water rights for 15,000 acres. The partnership between the Central Platte Natural Resources District and the Thirty Mile Irrigation Company was initiated in January 2012 to create a more efficient irrigation system. (The canal company became an irrigation district in September 2013; making the Thirty Mile Irrigation District a political subdivision.) The CPNRD paid \$1.9 million for half interest in the irrigation district; which includes half of the irrigation district’s water rights and half of the value of buildings and equipment. The rehabilitation has included replacement or installation of 8 bridges, 8 check structures, 9 drop structures, 3 pipe roadway crossings, 2 pipe laterals, 4 miscellaneous structures, 5 flow measurement devices/structures and installation of rip rap.

PROJECT FUNDING	
Platte Basin Habitat Enhancement Project	
Nebraska Department of Natural Resources	40%
Nebraska Environmental Trust	20%
Central Platte Natural Resources District-	40%
Thirty Mile Irrigation District will reimburse NRD @ 20%	
PROJECT COST	\$5,018,982.01
<i>Project loans provided by Five Points Bank of Grand Island, NE.</i>	
<i>Engineering Firm- Olsson Associates of Grand Island, NE.</i>	

An interlocal agreement was signed in February 2014, creating the CPNRD-TMID Stream Flow Enhancement Alliance. The agreement outlines the continued maintenance & delivery of surface water for both irrigation and groundwater recharge. The partners will use the canal in the non-irrigation season to hold diverted excess Platte River flows when available, will divert allocations that are leased back to TMID, and return the consumptive use portion of the transferred water to the Platte River. The non-consumptive portion of the appropriation will be used for ground water recharge throughout the canal system.





SOUTH PLATTE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

551 Parkland Drive, PO Box 294 Sidney, Nebraska 69162
(308) 254-2377 FAX (308) 254-2783 www.spnrd.org

June 13, 2014

Timothy McCoy, Deputy Director
Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
P.O. Box 30370
Lincoln, NE 68503-0370

Dear Mr. McCoy:

Thank you for your recent letter dated May 19, 2014. As chairperson of the Platte Overappropriated Area Committee, I am happy to respond to your concerns.

Your letter requests that the "Basin-wide Plan for Joint Integrated Water Resources Management of Overappropriated Portions of the Platte River Basin, Nebraska and the Integrated Management Plans jointly developed by the Department of Natural Resources and the North Platte Natural Resources District, Twin Platte Natural Resources District, South Platte Natural Resources District, Central Platte Resources District and the Tri-Basin Natural Resources District" be revised to include sections that require the consultation and collaboration process as defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-715(5)(b). The statutory process referenced in your letter is for the initial development of the first increment IMPs and Basin-wide Plan. Since we are currently in the middle of the first increment, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-715(5)(d)(ii), the NRDs and DNR can amend the IMP based on an annual review. Note that this statute does not reference the consultation and collaboration process. However, through the annual basin meeting, stakeholders are given the opportunity to provide input on issues related to the plans. In addition to the annual basin meeting, stakeholders have the opportunity to provide input on plan amendments at a public hearing held in accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-743.

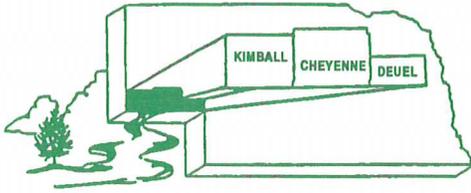
The NRDs and DNR will continue to work toward meeting our obligations under the Basin-wide and Integrated Management Plans through a variety of means. The existing avenues for stakeholder input in the process, as required through the plans and statute will continue throughout the implementation of the first increment. The opportunity for consultation and collaboration with stakeholders will occur, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-715(5)(d)(iv), during the development of the second increment plans.

We look forward to your input at our upcoming Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 19, 2014 at the Tri-Basin Natural Resources District Office at 1 p.m. CDT.

Sincerely,

Rod L. Horn
General Manager, South Platte NRD and Chair of the Platte Overappropriated Area Committee

pc: Platte Overappropriated Area Committee Members (via email)



SOUTH PLATTE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

551 Parkland Drive, PO Box 294 Sidney, Nebraska 69162
(308) 254-2377 FAX (308) 254-2783 www.spnrd.org

June 13, 2014

Brian L. Barels, Water Resources Manager
Nebraska Public Power District
P.O. Box 449
Columbus, NE 68602-0449

Dear Mr. Barels:

Thank you for your recent letter dated May 20, 2014. As chairperson of the Platte Overappropriated Area Committee, I am happy to respond to your concerns.

Your letter requests that the "Basin-wide Plan for Joint Integrated Water Resources Management of Overappropriated Portions of the Platte River Basin, Nebraska and the Integrated Management Plans jointly developed by the Department of Natural Resources and the North Platte Natural Resources District, Twin Platte Natural Resources District, South Platte Natural Resources District, Central Platte Resources District and the Tri-Basin Natural Resources District" be revised to include sections that require the consultation and collaboration process as defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-715(5)(b). The statutory process referenced in your letter is for the initial development of the first increment IMPs and Basin-wide Plan. Since we are currently in the middle of the first increment, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-715(5)(d)(ii), the NRDs and DNR can amend the IMP based on an annual review. Note that this statute does not reference the consultation and collaboration process. However, through the annual basin meeting, stakeholders are given the opportunity to provide input on issues related to the plans. In addition to the annual basin meeting, stakeholders have the opportunity to provide input on plan amendments at a public hearing held in accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-743.

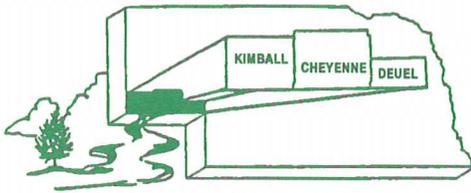
The NRDs and DNR will continue to work toward meeting our obligations under the Basin-wide and Integrated Management Plans through a variety of means. The existing avenues for stakeholder input in the process, as required through the plans and statute will continue throughout the implementation of the first increment. The opportunity for consultation and collaboration with stakeholders will occur, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-715(5)(d)(iv), during the development of the second increment plans.

We look forward to your input at our upcoming Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 19, 2014 at the Tri-Basin Natural Resources District Office at 1 p.m. CDT.

Sincerely,

Rod L. Horn
General Manager, South Platte NRD and Chair of the Platte Overappropriated Area Committee

pc: Platte Overappropriated Area Committee Members (via email)



SOUTH PLATTE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

551 Parkland Drive, PO Box 294 Sidney, Nebraska 69162
(308) 254-2377 FAX (308) 254-2783 www.spnrd.org

June 13, 2014

Don Kraus, P.E., General Manager
Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District
415 Lincoln Street
P.O. Box 740
Holdrege, NE 68949-0740

Dear Mr. Kraus:

Thank you for your recent letters dated May 20, 2014. As chairperson of the Platte Overappropriated Area Committee, I am happy to respond to your concerns.

Your letter requests that the "Basin-wide Plan for Joint Integrated Water Resources Management of Overappropriated Portions of the Platte River Basin, Nebraska and the Integrated Management Plans jointly developed by the Department of Natural Resources and the North Platte Natural Resources District, Twin Platte Natural Resources District, South Platte Natural Resources District, Central Platte Resources District and the Tri-Basin Natural Resources District" be revised to include sections that require the consultation and collaboration process as defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-715(5)(b). The statutory process referenced in your letter is for the initial development of the first increment IMPs and Basin-wide Plan. Since we are currently in the middle of the first increment, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-715(5)(d)(ii), the NRDs and DNR can amend the IMP based on an annual review. Note that this statute does not reference the consultation and collaboration process. However, through the annual basin meeting, stakeholders are given the opportunity to provide input on issues related to the plans. In addition to the annual basin meeting, stakeholders have the opportunity to provide input on plan amendments at a public hearing held in accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-743.

The NRDs and DNR will continue to work toward meeting our obligations under the Basin-wide and Integrated Management Plans through a variety of means. The existing avenues for stakeholder input in the process, as required through the plans and statute will continue throughout the implementation of the first increment. The opportunity for consultation and collaboration with stakeholders will occur, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-715(5)(d)(iv), during the development of the second increment plans.

With regard to your second letter, dated May 20, 2014, and discussing conflicts raised at the 2013 Basin-Wide Plan meeting, please reference the previous letters you received from the Committee addressing your concerns related to the North Platte NRD management actions.

Don Kraus, P.E., General Manager
Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District
June 13, 2014

We look forward to your input at our upcoming Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 19, 2014 at the Tri-Basin Natural Resources District Office at 1 p.m. CDT.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rod L. Horn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Rod L. Horn
General Manager, South Platte NRD and Chair of the Platte Overappropriated Area Committee

pc: Platte Overappropriated Area Committee Members (via email)