

Water Committee Meeting
Wednesday, June 26, 2019 5:00 PM
Lower Platte North NRD Office
P.O. Box 126
Wahoo, NE 68066

1. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2. REGULATORY

2.A. GROUND WATER MANAGEMENT AREA

2.A.1. Variance Request for Expanded Water Use from Existing Well with Acre Feet Allotment.

Dan Wondercheck has submitted a variance to irrigate an additional 72 acres from Well G-187345 in E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 10-21N-5W. At this time he has 36 certified irrigated acres in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 10-21N-5W. If the NRD uses the 27 inches rolling allocation on the 108 acres over 3 years, this would allow him 12 inches over a 3 year period.

2.A.2. Net Grant 2019

An invoice for 2 remote ET gages are attached for payment. This is part of the best management projects within the phase areas. Part of this invoice will be reimbursed through the NET grant.

2.A.3. Water Flow Meters

There is 548 irrigation wells in the nitrogen management areas. By water use reports there is 58 wells that currently have flow meters installed. Staff has been visiting with McCrometer and other NRDs on the best way to get a grant approved for meters. The suggestion is to become innovative and submit grants that meters were included along with other best management practices. A few grants are looking at the newer technology like remote reads, so real time decisions can be made more readily. The grant could include soil moisture sensors to be used in conjunction with the flow meters. The grant's purpose would emphasize water conservation to control leaching. The cost of water flow meters runs about \$2500, so 500 meters would cost about \$1,250,000. If you add the soil moisture sensors and converting the other 58 meters the grant would be closer to 1,500,000. If the Committee/Board wants to proceed, staff would put together a NET (Nebraska Environmental Trust) and WaterSmart Grant with a 50-50 split.

By my understanding if flow meters are mandatory then the NRD is not eligible for grant money. But if it isn't mandatory, how many producers will install a flow meter?

Other Questions:

1. What kind of cost-share would the NRD be offering?
2. Is the NRD interested in buying the meters for a government discount?

3 NET grant is due September 10 and WaterSmart is due April 2020. Do you want staff to apply or wait?

4. Is there other priorities that should go into the grants?

Committee was concerned with putting the extra cost and reliability of remote sensing and soil moisture sensors. Committee directed staff to write a NET grant for water flow meters without any remote sensing. Staff plans to present a draft to the Committee at the July Water Committee.

Staff and Committee discussed the approved meter list with the plan to review all meters on this list in the fall/winter. It was brought to the attention of the Committee about voluntary flow meter installation and does staff have the authority to obtain information without prior approval. Staff will be only collecting meter information from sites that are required to have meters without permission. All high capacity wells (over 50 GPM) drilled after May 8, 2008 and Expand Acres Variances approved after December 10, 2012 are required to have a flow meter with annual water use reports.

2.A.4. Vadose Sampling in Phase Areas

Proposals has been submitted by UNL and EA Engineering. JEO letter shows that they will not be submitting a proposal. Russ and Daryl reviewed the proposals and recommend EA Engineering to do Phase 1 (collecting the samples from the field) and the Water Center will do the laboratory analysis on the water and soil collected.

2.A.5. Voluntary Integrated Water Management Plan - LPNNRD

Daryl met with Amy Zoller - NDNR about the required annual V-IMP (Voluntary-Integrate Management Plan) review. It has been one year since the Board approved the V-IMP for the District. The annual report is due March 1 of each year with the annual review conducted after the report. Items discussed were goals and objectives with both parties feeling that majority of the items in the plan were proceeding as planned. One of the issues that will need addressed is the yearly re-allocation of allowable water use. When the plan was approved it was agreed by both parties that a 50-50 split would be acceptable of the 2,276 AF (acre-feet) of the allowable new development for the first 5 years. This allotment will be adjusted on an annual basis. Since we started with the V-IMP in 2016 the LPN has gave out 771.1 acre feet. Initially if we started out with 50 percent of the 2276 AF the LPN would begin with 1138 AF over 5 years, so that would leave us with 366.9 AF available over the next 2 years. DNR has not used any of their allotments, so as both parties re-allocate every year that would leave us 752.48 AF to use over the next 2 years. The plan is not to use this much as the remaining balance can be carried over into the next 5 year allowable depletions. These numbers are how it was interpreted, so until it is actually seen in writing, please accept these numbers as estimates.

Attached is some information from DNR V-IMP report with the plan to make a formal presentation to the Water Committee/Board June 2020.

Committee wants an update on the V-IMP at an upcoming Water Committee. At the

present time the report will be given at the Committee on August 29. More information will be coming, so other Board members can have an opportunity to sit in on the presentation.

2.B. CHEMIGATION

For 2019 we have 660 renewals and 28 new permit applications for a current total of 688. Inspections for 41 renewal permits have been completed along with 10 new permits.

The breakdown by County for the Total Number of Renewals within the LPNNRD.

County	Number of Renewals
Boone	53
Butler	106
Colfax	56
Dodge	111
Madison	7
Platte	105
Saunders	222

The breakdown by county of the number of renewal inspections completed.

County	Number of Renewal Inspections Completed
Boone	15
Butler	
Colfax	1
Dodge	
Madison	1
Platte	15
Saunders	9

The breakdown, by county for the 28 new chemigation permit applications, are listed below:

County	New Chemigation Applications
Boone	4
Butler	1
Colfax	7
Dodge	3
Madison	
Platte	4

3. GROUND WATER PROGRAMS

3.A. DECOMMISSIONED WELL PROGRAM--Updating reasonable rates & Cost-share that was approved in the last fiscal year

Updating Reasonable Rates & Cost-share approved for the last fiscal year

Reasonable rate information:

- The reasonable rate sheet is attached with the recommended rates that have been updated by the staff. The sheet includes changes to itemized rates based upon averages that are provided by licensed well contractors that have performed well decommissioning's throughout our district within the last two years. The rates are an average between the actual rate averages of the well contractors and the approved rates at the present time. Recommendations for a capped reimbursement amount on all drilled wells and hand-dug wells is also included on the sheet. There may also be certain circumstances that a well may be much more substantial than our capped reimbursement amounts.
- **Max Cost-Share cap for any drilled well: \$750 (reimbursed amount from the DNR is \$500)-open for discussion; secondary suggestion is to adjust to \$1,000**
Max Cost-Share cap for any hand-dug well: \$1,000 (reimbursed amount from the DNR is \$700)-open for discussion; secondary suggestion is to adjust to \$1,500
- If a well has an outstanding expense that is far beyond our capped reimbursement amount it shall be looked at a case by case basis and may be approved upon the Water Committee and Board decision. For example if a well is 400+ feet deep or if there is a large hand-dug well it may cost more than a couple grand to decommission. If a well meets this criteria then the Water Committee and Board could approve an amount exceeding the capped limit for reimbursement to the well owner; which would allow for more incentive to get the well decommissioned.
- Rate changes: Pump and Obstruction removal (livestock & Domestic) Currently (\$110.00) **Adjust to \$125.00**; Disinfecting material **Remain at \$4.25 per bottle**; Gravel fill, recommend changing it to one fixed rate (per ton) currently \$27.50 ton/delivered **Adjust to \$31.50**; Bentonite material (50 lb bag) **Adjust to \$13.00**; Pre-fab cap, **Remain at \$40.00**; Backhoe labor is currently \$84.75/hr, **Adjust to \$95.00**; General Labor is currently \$55.00/hr, **Adjust to \$60.00**; Mileage is currently \$2.10/mile, **Adjust to \$2.25/mile**; **Taxes Remain at 7.0%**

Cost-share approved in the last 2018-2019 Fiscal year:

- Cost-share for ten (10) wells for the well decommissioning cost-share program were completed and reimbursed in the last fiscal year.

- The LPNNRD total reimbursement to well owners was \$7,031.30 total. That's an average of \$703.13 per well. The total reimbursement that the LPNNRD will receive from DNR shall be \$4,499.34. The well decommissioning budget for the 2018-2019 fiscal year was \$10,000.

3.A.1. Well Estimates

new wells has been reviewed and approved for decommissioning since the last Committee meeting.

Well Owner	Type of Well	Cost Share Estimate	County

3.A.2. Plugged Wells

wells have been plugged, reviewed, and ready for cost share payment approval this month.

Well Owner	Type of Well	Cost Share	County
Lawrence Hynek	Hand-dug	\$647.39	Saunders
Mary Morrison	Irrigation	\$742.04	Saunders

3.B. LOWER PLATTE NORTH NRD GROUND WATER STUDIES

3.B.1. Eastern Nebraska Water Resources Assessment (ENWRA)

A meeting with the technical committee was held on June 17 in Norfolk. The budget was presented to the group with next years dues still set for \$30,000. Katie Cameron and Jesse Korus presented to the committee the idea of hiring a person to take care of the Geo-Cloud and to start assembling geologic models of the AEM (Airborne Electromagnetic Survey)

data along with wells and bore holes. ENWRA will be applying for a WSF grant to start this process and will be wanting letters of support from the NRD partners.

3.C. GROUND WATER QUALITY SAMPLING

Staff is in the process of collecting water sampling from all of the dedicated monitoring wells. Some of the wells are too deep to allow pumping, so staff is utilizing a rope with a hydra sleeve attached, which is lowered into the wells for 24 hours. Staff will then bring the hydra sleeves out of the well and pour the water collected into the proper jars for analysis. An invoice is attached for the hydra sleeves.

3.D. GMDA Summer Conference

Attached is the report from GMDA conference in Salt Lake City. GMDA Winter Conference is planned for January 12-15, 2020 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

4. SURFACE WATER PROGRAMS

4.A. STATE LAKES, FOR THE WEEK OF JUNE 17, 2019

No lakes in Lower Platte North are on current HAB Alert or with high E.coli bacteria.

What should I look for to avoid Harmful Algal Blooms?

Harmful Algal Blooms usually have heavy surface growths of pea-green colored clumps, scum or streaks, with a disagreeable odor. It can have a thickness similar to motor oil and often looks like thick paint in the water. Algae blooms usually accumulate near the shoreline where pets and toddlers have easy access and the water is shallow and more stagnant. It is important to keep a watchful eye on children and pets so that they do not enter the water. Aspects to watch out for include:

- **Water that has a neon green, pea green, blue-green or reddish-brown color.**
- **Water that has a bad odor.**
- **Foam, scum or a thick paint-like appearance on the water surface.**
- **Green or blue-green streaks on the surface.**
- **Areas with algae that look like grass clippings floating in the water.**
- **When algal blooms are present at a lake, avoid protected bays and shorelines on the windward side of the lake. These are areas that generally have higher concentrations of algae, and potentially toxins.**

5. OTHER (Budget)

5.A. Committee Date and Time

The Water Committee is proposing to move the Water Committee to Thursday morning, as majority of the directors are already coming to other Committee meetings.

5.B. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC