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*Natural Resources District*

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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For Immediate Release

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### **Tri-Basin NRD Moving Forward with Voluntary Little Blue Basin Integrated Management Plan**

In a continuing effort to cooperatively manage groundwater resources in the Little Blue River Basin, Tri-Basin Natural Resources District (NRD) is moving forward with plans to develop an Integrated Management Plan (IMP) that corresponds with a voluntary IMP being developed in the Little Blue NRD.

Tri-Basin NRD directors have been working with directors from Little Blue NRD to coordinate groundwater conservation and regulation efforts between the two districts in response to declining groundwater levels in the eastern portion of Kearney County and western portion of Adams County. Under state law, voluntary IMPs must be created by each district individually, but the two plans can be connected by an additional agreement between the two NRDs.

"It is our desire, and Little Blue (NRD) has expressed the same interest, in closely coordinating our efforts in establishing IMPs in the Little Blue Basin," Tri-Basin NRD General Manager explained to Tri-Basin directors at their February board meeting. The IMP will move the district closer to the primary goal of protecting the district's groundwater resources and assuring that the aquifer will be sustained infinitely. Both NRDs are currently identifying stakeholders within the Little Blue Basin who will help develop the IMPs.

In other business, Thorburn reviewed Tri-Basin NRD's groundwater quality data with directors.

"We've been doing groundwater quality management for more than 25 years," Thorburn told directors. "Generally, we're on the way to stabilizing nitrate levels."

Data provided on district's Nitrogen Management Reporting Forms has indicated that over the past ten years, agricultural producers in Tri-Basin NRD are applying considerably less nitrogen than what is recommended for optimum crop production, yet yields have been consistently high. By monitoring nitrogen application in the

management areas, Tri-Basin staff and directors are working cooperatively with agricultural producers to protect the quality of the district's groundwater.

Tri-Basin NRD's board also:

- Approved seven certified irrigated acre transfers, one groundwater transfer, one request to adjust certified irrigated acres, and one Board of Educational Lands Fund lease.
- Approved four applications for well decommissioning cost-share funds totaling \$2,000 and ten applications for Tri-Basin NRD and NSCWP cost-share funds totaling \$7,398,60.

Tri-Basin NRD's next Board of Directors meeting will be Tuesday, March 8 at 1:30 p.m. at Tri-Basin NRD, 1723 Burlington in Holdrege, Nebraska.

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