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Natural Resources District

NEWS RELEASE

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Tri-Basin NRD to Offer Back-Up Water System Operator Services to Villages in District

In an effort to help protect drinking water supplies for district residents and to support the work of utilities departments of villages in Tri-Basin Natural Resources District (NRD), the district's directors voted at their March meeting to offer back-up Water System Operator services to villages that desire such assistance. In recent years, it has sometimes been difficult for smaller villages in the district to hire and retain personnel to maintain their water systems and complete associated record keeping. Tri-Basin staff will contact villages of less than 500 people with community water systems (Wilcox, Funk, Smithfield, Atlanta, and Loomis) to see if they are interested in using Tri-Basin staff as back-up operators. If enough interest is shown, two Tri-Basin water technicians will be trained to provide the services.

In another effort to protect the district's groundwater supply, Tri-Basin Directors approved the diversion of approximately 500 acre-feet of high Platte River flows into Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District's (CNPPID) E-65 Canal in mid-March. TBNRD and the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources will pay CNPPID roughly \$25,000 to divert the water, which will help recharge groundwater in the Platte Basin area of the district.

Tri-Basin Directors moved forward with steps in the Integrated Management Plan (IMP) processes in two of the river basins in the district. In the Platte Basin, directors designated Larry Reynolds of Lexington as a representative and Joe Larson of Loomis as an alternate to participate in meetings to update the existing basin-wide Platte Basin IMP. They also agreed to invite the stakeholders who were involved in the process of developing the original IMP to participate again. In the Little Blue Basin, directors approved a contract with JEO Engineering to facilitate stakeholder meetings necessary to develop a voluntary IMP in cooperation with Little Blue NRD.

Tri-Basin NRD's board also:

- Approved "Bridges to Opportunity" agreements with Farm Service Agency (FSA) Offices in Gosper and Phelps Counties. These agreements allow FSA employees to share information about Tri-Basin NRD's conservation programs with their customers.
- Approved one Farm Service Agency farm plan, one certified irrigated acre transfer, and one request to adjust certified irrigated acres.
- Approved three applications for well decommissioning cost-share funds totaling \$1,500 and ten applications for Tri-Basin NRD and NSCWP cost-share funds totaling \$3,973.11.

Tri-Basin NRD's next Board of Directors meeting will be Tuesday, April 5 at 1:30 p.m. at Tri-Basin NRD, 1723 Burlington in Holdrege, Nebraska.

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