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TBNRD Approves Lower Budget for FY 2018-2019, Republican Basin-Wide Plan

Tri-Basin Natural Resources District's (TBNRD) directors approved the district's budget for the 2018-2019 fiscal year with a property tax request that is 39 percent lower than the tax asking of the previous year's budget. The 2018-2019 property tax request is \$909,228.68, compared to \$1,473,708.81 for 2017-2018. The lower tax asking is possible because several of the district's projects, such as the Platte-Republican Diversion project and Sand Creek recharge structures, are on-going, and funding for them was included in prior years' budgets. The budget reflects the efforts of the district's directors to strike a balance between developing projects to protect groundwater supplies and utilize financial resources wisely.

In other business at their August meeting, TBNRD directors approved the Republican River Basin-Wide Plan to be advanced to public hearings. This plan is a cooperative effort among the four Republican River Basin NRDs, Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (NDNR), and stakeholders in the river basin. Prior to the vote, Carol Flaute from NDNR explained the process the group used in developing the plan, explaining it is the culmination of fifteen stakeholder meetings over three years. According to the plan's mission statement, its purpose is "to sustain a balance between water uses and water supplies so that the economic viability, social and environmental health, safety, and welfare of the Republican River Basin can be achieved and maintained for both the near term and long term."

"We've had good involvement," said TBNRD manager John Thorburn of the plan's development process. "We ended up in a good place."

Tri-Basin NRD was the first of the Republican River NRDs to approve the plan. If it is approved by Lower Republican NRD, Middle Republican NRD, and Upper Republican NRD, public hearings will be held to gather testimony before the plan's final approval. Flaute stated that the parties involved are targeting December or January for the plan's implementation.

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