

Preliminary Findings of the Director

In most years numerous surface water appropriations in the North Platte Natural Resources District are regulated or shut off because of insufficient flow in the North Platte River and its tributaries.

In 1993, the Department of Water Resources placed a moratorium on issuing new surface water permits in the North Platte River Basin because of insufficient unappropriated water.


The ground water aquifers throughout the North Platte Natural Resources District are hydrologically connected to the North Platte River and its tributaries.

Current uses of that hydrologically connected ground water are causing depletions to stream flows of the North Platte River and/or its tributaries and any increase in consumptive use of water in these aquifers will cause further depletions to stream flows of the North Platte River and/or its tributaries.

Any such increased depletion will further decrease already over appropriated stream flows and cause additional conflicts between surface water appropriators and ground water users, both within the North Platte Natural Resources District and downstream of the District.

During the study conducted by the Department, I, as Director, considered all relevant portions of the NPNRD Ground Water Management Plan developed by the District pursuant to § 46-656.12 to § 46.656.16 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes and have determined that the use of hydrologically connected ground water and surface water resources in the NPNRD, excluding the area along Pumpkin Creek because it is already within an integrated management area, is contributing to and in the reasonably foreseeable future is likely to continue to contribute to conflicts between ground water users and surface water appropriators and that conflicts between ground water users and surface water appropriators could be eliminated or reduced through the exercise of the authority of subsection (5) of § 46-656.28 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes.

February 27, 2004



Roger K. Patterson
Director, Department of Natural Resources