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To: "Steve Gaul" <sgaul@dnr.state.ne.us>
Subject: IMP Budget Follow up
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Steve,

With regard to follow up information for our IMP budget it is the intention of this NRD to actually certify all the water uses in the NRD. This is essential if we ever plan to go to an allocation system for the water. It also assists us in monitoring the expansion of irrigated acres in the NRD. It is also the intention to require measuring devices on all water uses except domestic and range livestock. Obviously this all takes money. The funds we show are estimates of the costs we anticipate. We anticipate needing approximately 2,500 flow meters at \$600 each for a total of \$1,500,000 in cost share.

We must provide some sort of way to transfer water as a means of reallocation of water for economic development for other uses. We do not know what this will cost to develop and implement such a program, but we put down some figures that seemed reasonable to us at this time. There are costs associated with the Stakeholders Group, with I & E programs and the need for clerical assistance. These should be fairly firm figures as they are based on actual experience.

Technical activities involve the hiring of a COHYST modeler. It is currently anticipated that the cost of this person would be shared by three to four NRDs. I would assure the person would cost between \$60,000 and \$65,000 plus benefits. Our share of the costs of the ongoing COHYST model is expected to be approximately \$25,000 for the next few years. This NRD has, for quite some time worked with the UG Geological Survey to conduct studies of our geology and groundwater to gain an understanding of our complex system. Those studies should be continued into the future, because there is still a great deal we do not understand. In addition we would like to look at some projects to make the water stretch as far as possible, such as recharge projects of the groundwater. The figures shown for these investigations some of which are ongoing should be fairly accurate through FY-09.

It takes personnel to gather groundwater quality and quantity data. We currently have two people devoted full time to this effort, but we feel that will need to increase within the next couple of years. The costs we indicated on the budget may be on the low side as personnel are an expensive part of any budget. We have drilled monitoring wells in the past and would continue drilling of these kinds of wells in the future. We need to drill these wells in formations, such as the Chadron, which have had little use in the past. Chadron wells have been developed during the drought to provide drinking water for human consumption as well as livestock. Supplies for drinking water are a significant concern in the North Platte Valley. The NRD plans to provide some funds to supplement other local, state and federal funding.

We have an ongoing effort with the University of Nebraska looking at deficit irrigation studies. Our share of these studies is \$20,000 each year for the next two years. As all this unfolds the need for GIS systems and databases seemingly becomes very important. It takes money to develop these systems so we put in our budget \$30,000 per year for the next few years. We do not know if this is a reasonable figure, however when we get serious about this, it may well require outside consultants to help develop these systems.

Since we are in an over appropriated area and will need to return to a fully appropriated area it seems the best approach is to offer incentives to retire acres to get down to the fully appropriated status. We have budgeted money this year to begin this process first in Pumpkin Creek and then expand this program to other over appropriated areas of the NRD. In Pumpkin Creek we are hoping of putting together the funds (federal, state and local) to provide \$750 per acre for the permanent retirement of acres from irrigation. We would expect it to cost more to retire acres in the North Platte Valley. We simply put in the budget \$500,000 per year for this effort. We would hope that federal funds may be available for this purpose as well.

I hope this is the kind of response you were looking for. If you need additional clarification please contact us.

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