

July 19, 2006

* Permanent Conversion Special Incentive Area for the Republican River Basin in Nebraska. Limited to land irrigated with ground water diverted above the Guide Rock Diversion Dam.

50 Miles

0 10 20 30 40

Not produced for the purpose of measurement.



United States
Department of
Agriculture
Natural Resources
Conservation
Service

Funds Available to Reduce Irrigation in Republican Basin

Short Deadline for Application-July 24 thru Aug. 4, 2006

NE Fact Sheet

www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov

July 2006

Partnership Offers Landowners another Option to Reduce Irrigation Water Use

The Natural Resources Conservation Service, Nebraska Department of Natural Resources and the Upper, Middle, Lower Republican and Tri-basin Natural Resources Districts are offering about \$1.7 million dollars to irrigation farmers to reduce water usage.

This special incentive is available only for groundwater irrigation systems within the Republican River Basin (see map on back). This incentive may likely be a one-time offer that will depend on future state, local and federal budgets.

Landowners will receive a total of \$675 per acre, shared among the three organizations. Land entered into this incentive will be in a contract with NRCS through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. NRCS will pay \$100 per acre for three years. The State and Natural Resources Districts will offer an additional, one-time payment of another \$375 per acre. One State/District contract will be required.

This incentive requires a permanent easement for the land, which means it can never be used for irrigation again. Landowners will retain ownership. It can be used for dry land crops or planted to grass. Producers can apply for an additional EQIP contract to apply terraces, establish

grazing systems, etc. The easement stays with the land forever, even if ownership changes.

THE INCENTIVE DETAILS

Land must have been irrigated for four of the last six years using only ground water. The well that irrigates the offered field must be located within the initiative area and be NRD certified irrigated fields. The maximum area that can be enrolled and receive payment can not exceed 160 acres per participant. An existing field may be subdivided ONLY when the field size exceeds 160 acres. Each contract must include at least 15 acres. The pipes, pivot, and all other equipment used to irrigate the enrolled acres must be permanently removed, detached or disabled.

WHY THIS SPECIAL INITIATIVE?

Republican River irrigators are dealing with drought. They also need to reduce consumptive use in the basin to aid in compliance with the Republican River Compact. Irrigated lands near the Republican River and its major tributaries have the quickest positive response on the base flow of the river. This incentive compliments the options in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program that is also still available.

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DNR 004454

2005 TOTAL CERTIFIED ACRES

COUNTY (W to E)	CERTIFIED ACRES	NUMBER OF WELLS
FURNAS	61,898.90	872
HARLAN	100,441.34	1,091
FRANKLIN	107,792.17	1,077
WEBSTER	45,440.00	495
NUCKOLLS	10,305.40	173

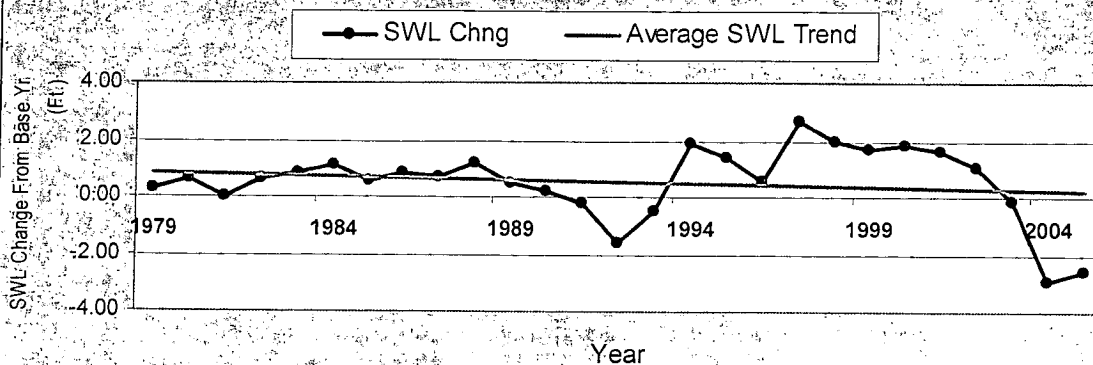
2005 CREP CONTRACTS (APPROVED)

NRD	# CONTRACTS	TOTAL ACRES	GROUNDWATER ACRES	SURFACE WATER ACRES
UPPER REPUBLICAN	71	10,939.3	10,939.3	—
MIDDLE REPUBLICAN	140	15,435.3	12,748.6	2,686.7
LOWER REPUBLICAN	89	7,171.3	6,137.6	1,033.7
TRI-BASIN	11	1,395.2	1,395.2	—
TOTAL	311	34,941.1	31,220.7	3,720.4

2005 EQIP CONTRACTS (APPROVED)

NRD	# CONTRACTS	TOTAL ACRES	GROUNDWATER ACRES	SURFACE WATER ACRES
UPPER REPUBLICAN	6	527.90	527.90	—
MIDDLE REPUBLICAN	38	2,781.12	2,524.02	257.10
LOWER REPUBLICAN	90	5,870.54	3,297.87	2,572.67
TRI-BASIN	2	109.72	109.72	—
TOTAL	136	9,289.28	6,459.51	2,829.77

LRNRD Average SWL



ECONOMY: Agriculture is the main occupation found in the District. The valuation of agricultural lands makes up almost 90% of the valuation total.

SURFACE WATER: The main stream flowing through the District is the Republican River. Other important tributaries include the Sappa, Beaver, Prairie Dog, Crooked, Center, Willow, Lost, Turkey, Thompson, Muddy, and Elm creeks. Harlan County Reservoir was completed in 1952 as a flood

control and irrigation water supply project. It is located in the southeast portion of Harlan County. The project supplies water to Bostwick Irrigation District, which it delivers to 22,935 acres in the Lower Republican NRD. The Frenchman-Cambridge Irrigation District supplies surface water to approximately 22,085 acres in Furnas and Harlan Counties from releases of flood control and irrigation supply dams upstream of the Furnas/Red Willow County line.

GROUNDWATER: Generally groundwater exists in most areas of the District except south of the Republican River. The base of the underlying sand and gravel layers which contain water bearing material rest on impervious layers of Pierre Shale, the Niobrara and Wellington Formations, and the Chase Group. As of January 2006, 3714 wells have been registered.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Harlan Co.-Melissa Schlutz
Nuckolls Co.-Marian Reece
Webster Co.-Lynetta Snelling

Board of Directors

Sub-district 1-Grace Fav
Sub-district 1-Brian Holtze
Sub-district 2-Jack Frear
Sub-district 2-Toby tenBensel
Sub-district 3-James Moore
Sub-district 3-David Walton
Sub-district 4-Nelson Trambly-Chair
Sub-district 4-Jay Ziegler-Treasurer
Sub-district 5-Terry Hoit
Sub-district 5-Roger Nelson-Secretary
At-Large-Brad Wulf-Vice Chair

LRNRD FACTS

FY2006 Budget - \$2,235,728

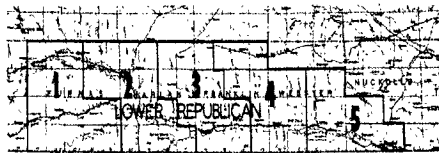
Valuations - \$1,370,339,387

Property Tax Needed - \$690,100

Levy - 0.050360 per \$100

Lower Republican Natural Resources District

A Commitment to Preserving Groundwater



The Lower Republican Natural Resources District is committed to the preservation of our most precious natural resource, groundwater. We are proud of the strides we have made and commend our patrons for the bold sacrifices they have undertaken.

The Lower Republican put a moratorium on new well drilling on December 9th, 2002. We implemented a stay on the development of new irrigated acres effective December 31st, 2004. In cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources we approved an Integrated Management Plan with an effective date of June 24th, 2005. The strict rules and regulations that apply to the plan limit groundwater allocations east of Highway 183 to 33 inches for three years and west of Highway 183 to 36 inches for three years. Our allocations are the lowest in the state.

To further conserve, we do not allow water to be transferred. In addition we have provisions that limit the amount of carry over or banked water into a new allocation period. Over \$680,000 in our 2006 budget will go towards groundwater management related activities.

The average water use District-wide for 2003 was 13.03 inches, 11.24 inches in 2004 and 7.74 inches in 2005. In 2005 producers pumped 33% below allocation.

In addition to groundwater quantity the District is actively involved in a number of groundwater quality issues. We established the Superior Hardy Special Protection Area; which was the first of its kind in the state. In October of 2005 we began delivering water on our new Rural Water Project. The project provides safe potable water for domestic and livestock use to 137 users and the Village of Guide Rock.

2005 GROUNDWATER USE BY COUNTY (Excludes Co-mingled Acres)

COUNTY West to East	VOLUME (Acre-feet)	ACRES	AVERAGE (Acre-Inch)	PIVOT	GATED PIPE
FURNAS	31,552	44,352	8.85	8.90	8.92
HARLAN	41,793	64,137	8.00	8.01	8.04
FRANKLIN	39,172	64,953	7.54	7.59	7.42
WEBSTER	22,022	39,573	7.33	7.09	8.42
NUCKOLLS	4,422	8,214	6.99	6.36	8.39

TOTAL LAND AREA: 2,484 sq. miles or 1,589,760 acres

ELEVATION: 1,574 to 2,060 feet above sea level

PRECIPITATION: Average annual precipitation ranges from about 22 inches in the west to 26 inches in the east. Approximately 75% of the precipitation is received from April to September. Drought conditions are not uncommon.

CLIMATE: The climate is one of limited precipitation, fluctuating precipitation and

humidity, frequent wind shifts and frequent sharp changes in temperatures.

SOIL TYPES: The soils of the LRNRD vary from sand to silt to clay

LAND USE: Land use ranges from ranching to farming and are very nearly equally divided in the number of acres used for each. Less than 2% of the District is in urban areas, trees, water, roads, and farmsteads. Just over 20% of the District is irrigated.

CROPS: Corn, wheat, soybeans, alfalfa, and sorghum are the major crops grown under dry land and irrigated conditions. Corn is the primary crop.

LIVESTOCK: Beef cattle are the most common livestock with commercial hog production next.

POPULATION: The 2000 census reported 17,639 people. Population figures have seen major declines in the past 50 years. The average age of residents exceeds the national average. Population distribution is 36% in the rural area and 64% in urban communities.

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Water Tech-*John Bush*
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