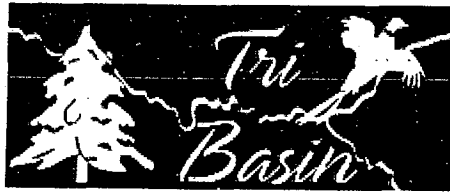


Tri-Basin NRD
1308 Second St.
Holdrege, NE 68949



Natural Resources District

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DAVID OLSEN
Axtell, Nebraska

DAVID RAFFETY
Kearney, Nebraska

RAY WINZ
Holdrege, Nebraska

September 13, 2007

Ms. Ann Bleed, Director
NE Department of Natural Resources
POB 94676
Lincoln NE 68509-4676

RECEIVED

SEP 14 2007

DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

Dear Ann:


I have received your letter inquiring whether Tri-Basin NRD is willing to accept a shorter extension to our integrated water resources management planning process than the two-year extension that we originally requested. The Tri-Basin NRD Board of Directors would prefer to have the full two-year extension, recognizing that the development of a basin-wide plan will likely consume most of our time and attention for the next several months. We are willing to agree to a shorter extension only if it is understood that we will need at least one year after completion of the basin-wide plan to complete our own district integrated management plan.

Tri-Basin NRD wants to create a comprehensive integrated management plan for the entire district. A plan that encompasses portions of three river basins will, by necessity, be complicated. It will also require detailed legal and technical review.

That said, Tri-Basin NRD is proceeding with integrated management actions, even in the absence of an integrated water resources management plan (IMP). We have prohibited development of additional irrigated acres throughout the district. We require that any new non-municipal water use must be offset by retirement of an equivalent amount of existing water use. Most importantly, we have sponsored, funded and promoted programs that reduce water consumption, such as CREP, the Conservation Corners Special EQIP initiative, the Twin Valley Weed Management Area and the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture Conservation Easement Initiative. We are now sponsoring an Environmental Trust grant application to compensate Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District for delivering water to Elwood Reservoir to protect the fishery in that lake, and to provide groundwater recharge to both Platte and Republican basin tributary streams.

Tri-Basin NRD wants to be assured by you that the actions that we have taken to reduce water use and enhance water supplies will be credited to our district when we are held accountable for offsetting depletions to the Platte and Republican River basins. We would greatly appreciate a written response from you on this topic. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,


John Thorburn
General Manager

Cc: TBNRD directors

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