



Lower Republican Natural Resources District

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The Honorable Dave Heineman
PO Box 94848
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Lincoln, NE 68509-4848

Governor Heineman,

*insurmountable
challenge*

The Republican Basin NRD's met with Ann Bleed on October 18th in Cambridge to review the results of some of the most recent modeling data. The results of that meeting have left me and our Board of Director's in shock. Preliminary estimates for 2005 show the basin to be an additional 42,000 acre feet in the red. This coupled with the 65,000 acre feet deficit for 2003 and 2004 poses an insurmountable challenge for the state as far as compact compliance at the end of next year.

What's even more alarming is the model shows completely stopping pumping in the basin in 2006 would only result in a one year savings of about 20,000 acre feet and about 50,000 acre feet over six years. In other words even the most extreme form of regulation will not put Nebraska in compliance.

After months of negotiations last spring we approved an Integrated Management Plan with the Department of Natural Resources. This is a three year plan that called for huge sacrifices from area producers. Our pumping regulations are the lowest in the state at 11 inches in the eastern part of our District.

For our District 2005 was near normal precipitation wise and our pumping numbers were reduced by 25% from 2004. It's very disheartening to see our hard work and effort fall short of what I think are unobtainable compliance goals.

Producers in the Republican have already paid a huge price. In the Lower Republican NRD alone they have paid \$1,700,000 out of their pockets to install flow meters. This coupled with the economic impact of taking good farm ground out of production has already hurt local economics.

With that being said I still think it's critical that we utilize as much of CREP as possible. There is nearly 37,000 acres in the Platte below McConaughy that are not being

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