

Water Committee Meeting
Wednesday, February 1, 2017 5:00 PM
Lower Platte North NRD Office
P.O. Box 126
Wahoo, NE 68066

1. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business from the last Water Committee.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

Year	Chairperson	Vice-Chairperson
2016	Frank Pollard	Bob Meduna
2015	Frank Pollard	Bob Meduna
2014	Jim McDermott	Frank Pollard
2013	Jim McDermott	Frank Pollard

Person may serve two consecutive terms. Term of office is one year.

Robert Meduna was elected Chair and Dave Saalfeld as Vice-Chair of the Water Committee for 2017.

3. WATER COMMITTEE DAY AND TIME

Set date and time of Water Committee Meeting:

The Water Committee generally meets on the last Wednesday of the month at 5:00 pm.

No action was taken so Water Committee will continue to generally meet on the last Wednesday of the month at 5:00 p.m.

4. REGULATORY

4.A. GROUND WATER MANAGEMENT AREA

4.A.1. Variance Request in the Hydrologically Connected Area (Limited Development Area)

One new application was received for 135 acres. The district currently has 65 applications totaling 4,188.2 acres.

A producer who submitted a variance request, and was approved in the Fall of 2016 for 100 acres, now says he will not go thru with developing those acres. The Water Committee discussed whether or not to reissue those acres in the Hydrologically Connected Area to the next person or persons on the list. However, since we have not received it in writing, no action was taken.

The letter relinquishing those 100 acres was received on Monday, February 6, 2016.

4.A.2. Variance Requests in the Non-Hydrologically Connected Area (Normal Development Area)

No new updates

4.A.3. Variance Requests in the Restricted Development Areas

4.A.3.a. Variance Request of Martin Erickson - First Request

Martin Erickson requests changes in his Variance Conditions for his new acres in the RDA in NE 1/4, Section 20, T14N, R7E (see attached LPNNRD policy on RDA and Variance Conditions). This area is 1 mile south of the Saunders County Hospital in the Swedeburg subarea.

Mr. Erickson would like reconsideration on two of the variance and well permit conditions. The first one deals with only irrigating during the night time hours from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. of the following day or 9 hours during any 24 hour period. The Committee members wish to change wording on this variance condition that this is recommended, but to allow addition hours during the day or night on a trail basis for one year and later review.

4.A.3.b. Variance Request of Martin Erickson - Second Request

Martin Erickson requests changes in his Variance Conditions for his new acres in the RDA in NE 1/4, Section 20, T14N, R7E (see attached LPNNRD policy on RDA and Variance Conditions). This area is 1 mile south of the Saunders County Hospital in the Swedeburg subarea.

Mr. Erickson would like reconsideration on two of the variance and well permit conditions. The second one deals with the maximum allocation of 7 acre inches in any one year. He would like this expanded to 8 or 9 inches per year. After some discussion the Committee members wish to leave this unchanged.

4.A.4. Well Permit Program

4.A.4.a. Well Permits Approved

Wells Permits Approved: 2

Landowner	Number of Wells	Number of New Irrigated Acres	Type of Well	County	Subarea
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Judith A Nelson	1	135	New (Irrigation)	Platte	Upper Newman Grove
Jack Nagel	1	135	New (Irrigation)	Saunders	Todd Valley

The total number of approved permits for 2017 is 2

Location of Approved Well Permits for 2017: Correct as of 2/1/2017

County	Irrigation - New	Irrigation - Replacement	Stock	Commercial	Municipal	Other	Total
Butler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Colfax	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dodge	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Boone	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Madison	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Platte	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Saunders	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	2	0	0	0	0	0	2

4.A.5. Special Quantity Subareas

SQS #1 (Butler-Saunders)

There are 30 irrigation wells in this area. 25 of these have a flow meter; the other five wells were not used in 2016. All 25 flow meter reporting forms have been returned. Angle is working on allocation calculations – 2017 will be the third year of their allocation for this SQS area.

SQS #2 (Platte-Colfax)

Flow meter report forms are being returned, but reports for about 70 registered irrigation wells are yet to be received. Staff is working on allocation calculations and results will be sent to producers this month.

4.A.6. Lower Platte River Basin Water Management Plan Coalition (LPRBC)

The sub-basins have not met to discuss the individual portion of Platte River Flows for each District. This is the next step in the Basin Plan.

4.A.7. Voluntary Integrated Water Management Plan - LENRD and LPNDRD

Staff met with Amy Zoller of DNR at the NARD Conference and they presented a draft plan for our V-IMP. It includes input from DNR, but she said further comments from Jennifer Schellpeper (Head of DNR Water Planning Division) still need to be done. They hope to have the final draft done in February.

4.A.8. Cost Share Programs

4.A.8.a. Irrigation Well Sample Kits

A total of 348 irrigation kits were mailed in 2016. We have already received a couple of requests for nitrate-nitrogen sample kits for 2017.

4.A.8.b. Nebraska Agricultural Water Management Network (NAWMN)

Interest in the this program is waning, we had less than 10 producers signed up last year. NRCS mentions the program at every NRD Certification Class and we are currently taking signups for this summer.

4.A.8.c. Flow Meter Maintenance Program

We received a blank contract between Tri-City Meters and UBBNRD that will be reviewed by Jovan L. The idea is this will provide a basis for our own contract with Tri-City Meters.

4.A.8.d. Flow Meter Cost Share in SQS #2

Flow meter cost-share applications continue to be received in the mail but at much slower pace. A second mailing was sent to producers in January to encourage them to take advantage of this cost-share program.

At the November 30, 2016 Water Committee, motion was made to fund GWEL cooperator wells at \$1,000 per 8 inch meters (\$770 from WSF and \$230 from LPNNRD = \$1,000) and at \$749 per 6 inch meters (\$577 from WSF and \$172 from LPNNRD = \$749)

As of February 1, 2017 we have received a total of 162 applications. Several of these still need to be inspected to insure that the meter is installed properly.

Six well sites have applied for 2 meters each, but following motion of the Water Committee, only one meter per irrigation system will receive funding.

Therefore, for the February 13, 2017 Board Meeting, we will have a total of 13 cost-share applications to approve.

Water Sustainability Fund (WSF)	
8 inch meters	10 x 8" meters or 10 x \$770 = \$7,700
6 inch meters	3 x 6" meters or 3 x \$577 = \$1,731
WSF Total	\$9,431
	So Running Total WSF Grant = \$112,414 of \$200,000 grant
	So Remaining Total of WSF Grant = \$87,586

LPNNRD For GWEL Cooperators	
8 inch meter	2 x 8" meters or 1 x \$230 = \$460
6 inch meter	0 x 6" meters or 0 x \$172 = \$0
Carry over (8 inch meter)	0 x 8" meter or 0 x \$230 = \$0
LPNNRD Total	\$460

Total For Flow Meter Cost Share Program	
WSF & LPNNRD	For approval at February 13, 2017 Board Meeting = \$9,891

Letters and cost share forms were sent to the nine producers (on 11 irrigation wells) who have not yet installed flow meters (see attached list). As of February 1, 2017 none of these people have applied for cost share.

4.A.9. Bellwood Phase 2 Area

2016 is the fourteenth year for this Phase 2 Area. Phase 2 information packets with order were mailed to producers in June, before the start of irrigation. This area was reduced from 32 sections to 21 sections in 2015.

Year	Nitrate-Nitrogen Range	Percent Nitrate-Nitrogen 0 To 8.0 Ppm	Percent Nitrate-Nitrogen 8.01 To 10.00 Ppm	Percent Nitrate-Nitrogen Greater Than 10 Ppm
2015	0 to 32.3 ppm	43% (31 of 72)	8% (6 of 72)	49% (35 of 72)
2016	0 to 35.1 ppm	37% (25 of 68)	12% (8 of 68)	51% (35 of 68)

Hough Farms water sample of G-065461 collected in August had a **93.6 ppm** result for G-065461. After talking with Tommy Hough it was determined that this sample was collected while they were chemigating at this well. Oaklund arranged with Tommy Hough to re-sample this well. The result of the second sample was 13.6 ppm, which is within the range of previous sample results (3.70 to 18.5 ppm). *[Note: The 93.6 result was removed from the above table.]*

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2015	0 to 32.3 ppm	43% (31 of 72)	8% (6 of 72)	49% (35 of 72)
2016	0 to 35.1 ppm	34% (25 of 74)	11% (8 of 74)	55% (41 of 74)

123 Annual Fertilizer Application Reports for 2016 have been received. Mike Ebel and Daryl Finecy have been contacted for their reports.

4.A.10. Richland - Schuyler Phase 2 Area

2016 is the first year of this Phase 2 Area. There are 45 registered active irrigation wells in the ten sections of this new area.

Year	Nitrate-Nitrogen Range	Percent Nitrate-Nitrogen 0 To 8.0 Ppm	Percent Nitrate-Nitrogen 8.01 To 10.00 Ppm	Percent Nitrate-Nitrogen Greater Than 10 Ppm
2016	1.47 to 41.8 ppm	29% (10 of 34)	9% (3 of 34)	62% (21 of 34)

55 Annual Fertilizer Application Reports for 2016 have been received. A few landowners did not pass on the information and forms to their tenant. Oaklund has contacted these tenants and mailed them the information.

4.A.11. Richland - Schuyler Phase 3 Area

2016 is the first year of this Phase 3 Area. This Phase 3 area went into effect September 1, 2015. The 55 sections of this area first went into a Phase 2 Area in 2004.

Year	Nitrate-Nitrogen Range	Percent Nitrate-Nitrogen 0 To 8.0 Ppm	Percent Nitrate-Nitrogen 8.01 To 10.00 Ppm	Percent Nitrate-Nitrogen Greater Than 10 Ppm
2015	0 to 53.3 ppm	23% (55 of 238)	12% (29 of 238)	65% (154 of 238)
2016	0 to 50.5 ppm	25% (58 of 228)	10% (22 of 228)	65% (148 of 228)

367 Annual Fertilizer Application Reports have been received. Mark Horejsi, Dan Zoucha, Leander Rerucka, and Chad Sukstorf have been contacted for their reports. Horejsi has reports for both this area and the next (below) area. It seems that some producers have the CO-OP fill out their Annual Fertilizer Application Reports and then the producers simply sign them.

4.A.12. LPNNRD Operator Certification

4.A.12.a. LPNNRD Operator Certification Classes

Online testings in January:

Cert #	Cert date	Name	Re-cert	Comments
6762	1/10/2017	Tyler Bruhn	Yes	
6763	1/19/2017	Ronald McGill	Yes	
6806	1/25/2017	Chris Gustafson	Yes	

2017 Certification Classes for Nitrogen and Water Management

Class	Date & time	Location	Attend	First-Timers
# 1	Thursday, January 5th @ 3:00 p.m. (after Corn Expo)	Fremont - Christensen Field	36	6
# 2	Wednesday, January 18th @ 1:00 p.m.	ARDC - Mead	42	12
# 3	Thursday, January 26th @ 1:30 p.m.	Columbus - Ag Park	46	5
# 4	Tuesday, February 7th @ 9:30 a.m.	David City – Hruska Library		
# 5	Friday, February 10th @ 10:00 a.m.	Lindsay - Village Office		
# 6	Tuesday, February 21st @ 9:00 a.m.	Fremont - Extension Office		
# 7	Wednesday, March 1st @ 9:30 a.m.	Columbus - Pinnacle Bank		
# 8	Tuesday, March 7th @ 9:00 a.m.	Fremont - Extension Office		
# 9	Thursday, March 9th @ 1:30 p.m.	David City – Hruska Library		
# 10	Wednesday, March 15th @ 7:00 p.m.	ARDC - Mead		
# 11	Thursday, March 16th @ 7:00 p.m.	Columbus - Ag Park		

316 letters with class schedule for those expiring 4/1/2017 were mailed in December.

84 letters with class schedule for those that expired 4/1/2016 were mailed in December.

88 letters with class schedule for those that expired 4/1/2015 were mailed in December.

4.B. CHEMIGATION

No new update. For 2016 we have 478 renewals and 95 new permit applications for a current total of 573. In 2015 we had a total of 515 chemigation permits.

The chemigation summary for 2016 is due to DEQ by March 1, 2017 and Tyler Benal has already submitted this report.

4.C. LIVESTOCK WASTE PERMITS

No new livestock permit applications from DEQ since the last Water Committee meeting.

5. GROUND WATER PROGRAMS

5.A. DECOMMISSIONED WELL PROGRAM

5.A.1. Well Estimates

No new wells has been reviewed and approved by Gottschalk for decommissioning since the last Committee meeting.

5.A.2. Plugged Wells

One well has been plugged, reviewed, and ready for cost share payment approval this month.

Well Owner	Type of Well	Cost Share Estimate	County
Carson Day	18" Irrigation Well	\$581.81	Dodge

5.B. LOWER PLATTE NORTH NRD GROUND WATER STUDIES

5.B.1. Eastern Nebraska Water Resources Assessment (ENWRA)

The latest Technical Committee meeting was held on January 24, 2017 at the NARD Legislative Conference.

Topics discussed included:

- GeoCloud for all AEM data collected in the State
- Recharge Discussion
- Future AEM flights and getting grants
- USGS age dating of ground water
- Renewal of ENWRA coalition

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Nebraska GeoCloud Program is funded by a grant from the Water Sustainability Fund (approved on December 12, 2016) to house all AEM data collected in the State into one database for easier access. Cooperating partners include DNR, 10 NRD's, CSD, and USGS. Attached is a Interlocal Agreement for this 3 year effort. They are looking for a commitment from LPNNRD of \$3,400 a year for three years starting with the next fiscal year (FY2017-2018). A webinar is planned for February 23, 2017 with all parties involved (including the Netherlands) to review the process involved and details of the program. This will be discussed further at the next Water Committee meeting.

5.B.2. Platte and Elkhorn River Valley Integrated Water Monitoring

No new update.

5.B.3. Lower Platte River Consortium

The next meeting for the Lower Platte River Consortium meeting is set for February 23, 2017 for 2:00 p.m. at LPSNRD.

6. SURFACE WATER PROGRAMS

6.A. USGS WATER QUALITY MONITORING ON SHELL CREEK

The USGS has submitted a bill to the LPNNRD for continuous water quality monitoring on Shell Creek for \$2,700. This is part of a cooperative agreement the NRD has with USGS.

7. OTHER

7.A. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mary Wotipka wants the Water Committee and Board to reconsider the variance request by John Wotipka for new irrigated acres in the Restricted Development Area in NE1/4, Section 25, T14N, R6E. The original well permit application was made in 2005 but it wasn't until 2013 that they developed the land, which was after the area was declared a Restricted Development Area in 2008.