

August 31, 2017

NEWS RELEASE

Central Platte NRD Lowers Levy and Property Tax Request

(GRAND ISLAND, NE) The Central Platte Natural Resources District's (CPNRD) board set their tax asking down by \$476,542 and lowered the levy to 0.03239 for the 2017/2018 fiscal budget of \$5,639,132.09. Last year's levy was 0.03582. The board set the levy at their August board meeting on Thursday.

OTHER ACTION/AGENDA ITEMS

-Changes to Rules & Regulations The board approved changes to the NRD's Groundwater Management Rules and Regulations at their board meeting on Thursday. The changes combine and update the Rules and Regulations for all the District's groundwater management programs into one document including: Fully and Over Appropriated, Water Quality, Water Quantity and Chemigation programs.

Two major changes include cease and desist enforcement procedures and removal of the 2 in 10 irrigation rule. The Groundwater Management Plan Rules & Regulations-General Provisions & Procedures for Enforcement is available on request and published on the CPNRD website at: www.cpnrd.org.

-Education Programs Starting in 2018-2019, the CPNRD will offer five \$1,000 scholarships to junior and senior college students pursuing a natural resources degree through the CPNRD-Ron Bishop College Scholarship Program. The board also approved \$5,000 for natural resources presentations and materials for K-12 classrooms in the District.

-Urban Conservation Cost Share The board approved application forms and ranking priorities for a new urban conservation cost share program. The program is designed to assist sponsors in establish, develop and improve public recreational areas and trails, lake dredging, and with the acquisition of land or land rights for recreational purposes.

-Funding Requests The board approved a sponsor request in the amount of \$500 from NRCS for a Soil Health conference to be held September 6 in Albion; and denied a request of \$10,000 from UNL for the Plains Safaris conference to be held April 18-20, 2018 in Kearney.

-Support Requests The board approved submitting letters to the Nebraska Environmental Trust in support of two research proposals to examine the efficacy of injecting sawdust slurry to soil below the root zone of corn to capture leached nitrogen; and utilize eastern redcedar tree mulch on cropland to reduce erosion potential, improve soil structure, and improve soil moisture retention. The research will be conducted by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Nebraska Extension, and USDA.

-Cooperative Hydrology Study (COHYST) Duane Woodward, hydrologist, reported that the COHYST continues to refine and investigate new elements such as looking for best areas for recharge ponds and tracking excess flows as they return to the river. The model will be used to update the NRD's Groundwater Management Plan including the phase areas in the plan in the near future.

-Natural Resources Conservation Service Joe Krolkowski, district liaison, reported that Secretary Perdue announced a reorganization of the Department in May that will ensure improved customer service for our rural customers and greater efficiencies for the American taxpayer. Part of this reorganization included the creation of the Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) Mission area – a new mission area for the agencies which impact farmers and ranchers most directly: FSA, NRCS, and RMA.

-Hazard Mitigation Plan Jesse Mintken, assistant manager, reported that the updated Plan was approved by the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) on August 14, 2017. Mintken said that each entity participating in the Plan must have approval by their board. The NRD will consider approval of the Hazard Mitigation Plan next month.

-Upper Prairie/Silver/Moores Mintken also gave a progress report on the flood control project in northwestern Grand Island. Mintken said Van Kirk Construction has completed Phase I except for seeding the bottom of the cell; and Hooker Brothers has begun construction on Phase II of the project.

-Land Advisory Committee The board appointed Jim Bendfeldt as the joint Central Platte NRD and Tri-Basin NRD representative for the Platte River Program Committee, and John Thorburn as alternate.

-Voting Delegates The board elected Jim Bendfeldt as voting delegate and Jay Richeson as alternate for the Nebraska Association of Resources District's annual conference to be held September 25-26 in Kearney.

-Nebraska Natural Resources Commission Mick Reynolds, Middle Platte Basin representative, reported that 25 projects were submitted for the Water Sustainability Funds; including nine small projects (under \$250,000) totaling \$1.4 million and 17 large projects totaling \$17 million.

-Cost Share The board approved eight cost share payments through the Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program and the CPNRD Cost Share Programs for diversion, underground pipeline, cover crops, center pivot incentive, streambank stabilization and well decommissioning in the amount of \$22,236.23.

-Conservation Awards The board voted to discontinue the annual Conservation Awards.

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