

August 31, 2018

NEWS RELEASE

Central Platte NRD Sets Lower Property Tax Request

(GRAND ISLAND, NE) – The Central Platte Natural Resources District’s (CPNRD) board of directors signed a resolution to set the 2018/2019 fiscal budget levy at 0.02576 at their August board meeting on Thursday. The 2019 fiscal budget was approved at \$17.5 million in July, down from \$22.5 million in FY2018. The property tax request of \$4.5 million, down \$1.1 million, is based on valuations received from the 11 counties that the District serves. The overall valuation increase for Central Platte NRD was just under one percent.

A homeowner with a home valued at \$100,000 will pay \$25.76 this year for conservation benefits provided by the CPNRD including flood control, nitrate management, soil health, cost-share to producers, recreation, education, and other natural resources benefits.

OTHER ACTION/AGENDA ITEMS

-Crane Deck Resolution The board approved a resolution to apply for grant funding from the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission for the Central Platte Gibbon Crane Viewing Trails Rehabilitation Project. If the application is approved, CPNRD will provide 20% of project costs up to \$50,000.00 cash matching contribution. The goal of the project is to provide the best, safest viewing experience of central Nebraska’s unique and valuable Platte River wildlife.

-Voting Delegates Deb VanMatre was elected voting delegate and Jay Richeson elected alternate for the Nebraska Association of Resources District’s annual conference in September.

-Integrated Management Plans Lyndon Vogt, general manager, reported on the Basinwide and individual Integrated Management Plans (IMP); which were implemented to ensure that the state is in compliance with the Nebraska New Depletions Plan (NNDP) included within the Platte River Recovery Implementation Plan (PRRIP).

Vogt reported the final Basinwide Integrated Management Plan (IMP) stakeholders meeting will be held on September 19th. Along with future goals, the major update to the Plan is addressing drought management. The first ten-year increment will end in May 2019. Vogt also reported on the first stakeholder meeting held to review and update the Central Platte NRD’s individual IMP. Current stakeholders represent both surface water and groundwater interests such as irrigators, city utilities, power districts, economic development, and banking representatives. The stakeholder group will work towards a draft plan with a proposed completion date of May 2019.

The goal of the individual Plan is to set objectives to incrementally reduce the difference between current, fully, and over appropriated levels of development within the District. CPNRD has complied with the law by putting a stay on new development of irrigated acres without offsets and by initiating several projects that increase groundwater recharge and enhance streamflow.

Vogt said although current goals are being met, new offset requirements will be required in the new Plan and drought mitigation will be included. Upcoming meetings will be held in Kearney, Nebraska, and are scheduled for September 18, November 13, and January 15, 2019. Anyone interested in participating in this series of meetings may contact Lyndon Vogt, CPNRD general manager, at (308) 385-6282 or email vogt@cpnrd.org.

-Conditional Letter of Map Revision Jesse Mintken, assistant manager, reported that the floodplain maps for northwest Grand Island and portions of Hall County are one step closer to being revised to reflect the recent flood risk reduction efforts of the Central Platte NRD, City of Grand Island, and Hall County.

He said the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) recent approval of a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR). is a significant milestone for the Upper Prairie/Silver/Moores Creek Flood Control Project. If completed as proposed, the Project will meet the standards necessary to revise the FEMA floodplain maps for the area through a future Letter of Map Revision (LOMR). The CLOMR is essential to the floodplain map revision process as it provides assurance that FEMA will accept the technical information necessary to update the floodplain maps when the LOMR is submitted. It is anticipated that the LOMR request will be submitted to FEMA as soon as the levee and all project components have been constructed.

Mintken stressed that the area's floodplain maps have not yet been revised. The effective floodplain maps, which can be accessed through FEMA's Flood Map Service Center (www.msc.fema.gov), remain the effective floodplain maps until FEMA approves the future LOMR and subsequently updates the maps. As such, those with property in the floodplain should maintain flood insurance coverage in accordance with applicable laws; which Mintken said could take six months to one year after the project is completed.

-Nebraska Natural Resources Commission (NRC) Mick Reynolds, Middle Platte Basin representative, reported that the Commission reviewed the Department of Natural Resources FY 2019 operating budget, which was reduced 4%, affecting the following programs:

-Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program is down \$75,255

-Resources Development Fund is down \$125,613

-Water Sustainability Fund is down \$429,557 and the cash transfer was also reduced \$6 million.

Reynolds said there is \$10.8 million available for the next round of funding. 18 applications were submitted with requesting amounts totaling more than the funding available.

-Cost-Share Three applications were approved through the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program and the Central Platte NRD cost-share Program in the amount of \$13,000 for center pivot incentive, well decommissioning, and underground pipeline.

-Natural Resources Conservation Service Joe Krolikowski, District liaison, reported that NRCS hosted a National Conservation Planning Partnership and You Listening Session at the Younes Conference Center in Kearney, NE on July 19, 2018. Nebraska was one of 8 states asked by the National Office to host one of these listening sessions across the country. Nebraska was asked to host because of the large volume of agriculture and conservation program participation we have in this state.

Krolikowski also reported that NRCS and CPNRD are hosting the Area IV Range Judging Contest in Hall County on September 20th. Up to 400 high school students and range judging professionals are expected to compete.

HEARING IN SEPTEMBER

Rules & Regulation Changes The board reviewed proposed changes to the NRD's Rules and Regulations for the Groundwater Management Plan last month. Changes include new language regarding wells and adds a timeline for staff to receive transfer applications.

The final change increases the number of years that transfers are not allowed, from two years to five years, within a Ground Water Management Area where declines have been in excess of the 25 percent of the allowable level. The levels are determined by measurements taken in the spring by NRD staff.

A public hearing on the proposed changes will be held at 1:00 p.m. prior to the September 27th board meeting. The proposed changes are available for download at cpnrd.org or by contacting the Central Platte NRD office at (308) 385-6282.

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