

September 28, 2018

NEWS RELEASE

Central Platte NRD Makes Changes to Groundwater Management Rules & Regulations

(GRAND ISLAND, NE) – On Thursday, the Central Platte Natural Resources District’s (CPNRD) board of directors issued an order for changes to the NRD’s Rules and Regulations for the Groundwater Management Plan. The order was approved during the CPNRD’s September board meeting with changes to take effect November 1, 2018. Changes include new language regarding wells and adds a timeline for staff to receive transfer applications. The order also 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 more than the 25% of the allowable level. The levels are determined by measurements taken in the spring by NRD staff. The changes are available for download at cpnrd.org or by contacting the CPNRD office at (308) 385-6282.

The board also set a public hearing to be held on October 25, 2018, at 1:50 p.m. to lift the 180-day temporary stay on new wells and new irrigated acres. The stay was implemented to update the Rules and Regulations for the Fully and Over Appropriated Area of the District. During the temporary stay, the acre transfer tool was updated and new depletion numbers were implemented. The new numbers were determined by the Cooperative Hydrology Study (COHYST) Groundwater Model used for the Groundwater Quantity Management Program.

OTHER ACTION/AGENDA ITEMS

-Pilot Program Brandi Flyn, hydrologist, reported that the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources approved the transfer of 14,251 acre-feet of water to the Environmental Account. The transfer is part of Central Platte NRD’s pilot surface water exchange agreement with Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District (Central). The agreement states that during the 2018 irrigation season, CPNRD agrees not to deliver surface water to 25,491 acres from the three irrigation canals that CPNRD partners with (Cozad, Thirty Mile, & South Side canals) in exchange for Central crediting the Environmental Account with the resulting additional storage water in Lake McConaughy.

-Platte River Recovery Program Update The board elected Mark Czaplewski, biologist, as CPNRD voting delegate and Marvion Reichert, director, as alternate for a three-year term on the Land Advisory Committee for the PRRIP. Czaplewski was also recently re-elected for a three-year appointment on the Governance Committee. He reported that the Bureau of Reclamation is nearly completed with the National Environmental Policy Act process and will have their documents available online. He also reported that all the basin states are agreeable to the proposed extension and the federal budget and authorizations are expected to be approved early next year.

-Upper Prairie/Silver/Moores Update Jesse Mintken, assistant manager, reported that easements are in place and that levee construction has begun. Dirt work is expected to take place for the next three weeks with a construction completion date of November 30, 2018. 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) to be submitted to FEMA as soon as the levee and all project components have been constructed. Mintken also reported that the Corps of Engineers will now refer to the Project as the Upper/Prairie/Silver/Moores Flood Risk Reduction Project.

-Tree Program Agreement The board approved an agreement with the USDA Forest Service to allow the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts to acquire tree seedlings and shrubs to distribute seedlings across the state through the Natural Resources Districts.

-Cost-Share Six applications were approved totaling \$25,100 through the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program and the Central Platte NRD Cost-Share Programs. Practices approved included center pivot incentive, cover crops, burn preparation, and well decommissioning.

-Natural Resources Conservation Service Joe Krolikowski, District liaison, provided the following summary of the FY 2018 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) activity in the CPNRD:

-Water Conservation: \$1,240,052.03 (39 contracts/3,520.2 acres)

-Grazing Lands: \$395,016.52 (13 contracts/5,348.1 acres)

-Soil Health: \$111,510 (4 contracts/1,324.5 acres)

-Forestry: \$24,429 (1 contracts/50.2 acres)

-Upcoming Board Meetings To accommodate holiday schedules, the board of directors set their upcoming meeting for November 15th and December 20th.

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