

**NEBRASKA WATER SUSTAINABILITY FUND
GRANT AWARD ANNUAL REPORT
FOR APPLICATION NO. 4135
LOWER PLATTE NORTH NRD**

Groundwater Management for Mid-Summer Declines (Project) / Annual Report 2017

The Water Sustainability Fund (WSF) grant for the Lower Platte North NRD (LPNNRD) was approved in July of 2016 for \$200,000 as a cost share program for the purchase of flow meters by well owners in our Special Quantity Subareas (SQS). During the summer of 2012 the District experienced an intense one year drought, which caused deep but temporary pressure declines in the ground water levels of confined aquifers (also called artisan aquifers) in selected portions of the LPNNRD. This led to several well interference complaints from domestic, stock, and even irrigation well owners. Two areas were identified; along the Butler – Saunders County line (SQS#1) and the Platte – Colfax border and north of Columbus, Nebraska (SQS#2). The LPNNRD passed Rules and Regulations in our Ground Water Management Area to address these mid-summer decline including the installation of flow meters on wells and encouraging area producers to not all run at the same time.

PROJECT PROGRESS JULY 2016 TO APRIL 2017:

The LPNNRD has cost-shared with producers on 159 flow meters for a total of \$122,356. The NRD continues to work with 3 producers on an additional 11 meters for SQS#2 (Platte/Colfax) area. Water use reports are being received by the NRD on the flow meters with an average, as to date in 2016, between 4.5 – 5 inches per acre. This area is in a 27-inch rolling allocation and with the 2016 water use numbers received initially, the NRD and producers are off to a great start in decreasing the demand for groundwater.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES FROM NOW UNTIL NEXT ANNUAL REPORT DUE APRIL 1, 2018:

The LPNNRD will continue educating producers on how to utilize the flow meters as a management tool. Staff at the NRD will be sending out water use reports to producers showing the amount of water they applied in 2016 before the upcoming 2017 crop year and after. These reports will also show how much they will have left on their 27-inch rolling allocation. The hope is to be able to offer cost-share to the producers in SQS#1 and extending out 1-mile beyond the SQS#2 boundary, if permission is received.

LIKELIHOOD THAT BENEFITS PROJECTED IN APPLICATION 4135 WILL BE REALIZED:

Based on preliminary results provided by water use reports and cost-share applications, the project is on target for achieving the benefits to the LPNNRD as described in the application.