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January 8, 2010

TO: NARD Board, NRD Managers and Conservation Partners
FROM: Dean E. Edson, NARD Executive Director
RE: January 8 NARD Update

Session Begins -- The Nebraska Legislature convened its 60-day work session on January 6, 2010 and is tentatively scheduled to end on April 14th. Days off for Holidays (H) and Recess (R) are as follows: Jan 15 (R) and 18 (H); Feb 12 (R), 15 (H) and 26 (R); March 5 (R), 8 (R), 19 (R), and 22 (R); April 2 (R) and 5 (R). These are dates your senator(s) should be back in the district if you wish to schedule meetings with him or her.

FREE NET Live Feeds – Nebraska Educational Telecommunications will be offering live web streaming (both audio and video) of the Unicameral floor, committee hearings, Nebraska Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, and the Governor's hearing room. You can view it at <http://www.netnebraska.org/publicmedia/capitol.html> and it is free to the public. Simply click on the link, and select what you want to view. They also provide a schedule of what is showing on the website. An audio only option is also available.

New Bills -- Introduction of legislative bills occurs in the first ten working days of the session. This is the second session of the 101st Legislature, so there are carry over bills from last year. The following are bills of interest for the NRDs, introduced in the first few days. For more information on introduced legislation, visit the Nebraska Unicameral web-site at www.nebraskalegislature.gov/.

- **LB682 - Reviser bill. Wightman.** The bill repeals a section governing the Department of Natural Resources Interstate Water Rights Cash Fund that terminated June 30, 2003.
- **LB 689 -- Change Water Resources Cash Fund, Ethanol Production Incentive Cash Fund, and ethanol excise tax provisions. Langemeier.** The bill eliminates the 3/5ths cent/bushel check-off on corn and 3/5ths cent/hundredweight check-off on grain sorghum that was to go to the Water Resources Cash Fund starting in October 1, 2012. The bill also redirects the funds remaining in the Ethanol Production Incentive Cash Fund when the program ends December 31, 2012, splitting it equally with the commodity boards and the general fund. The funds were to go into the Water Resources Cash fund.
- **LB 731 – Changes provisions relating to noxious weed funds. Utter.** The bill allows funds received by cities and counties for noxious weed programs to be deposited in their respective general fund if they do not have a noxious weed fund.
- **LB 740 – Eliminates transfer provisions from certain agriculture funds. Agriculture Committee.** The bill eliminates references approved during the November 2009 Special Session that allows the legislature the discretion to transfer funds to the General Fund from the following cash funded programs: The Nebraska Buffer Strip Program, the Commercial Feed Act, the Weed Book Cash Fund, the Nebraska Seed Administrative Cash Fund, the Nebraska Pure Food Act, and the Weights and Measures program.

- **LB 764 -- Allows NRDs to develop IMPs in areas that are not Fully or Over-Appropriated. Fischer. (NARD Bill)** The bill allows a natural resources district encompassing a river basin, sub-basin, or reach that has not been designated as fully or over-appropriated may, jointly with the department, develop an integrated management plan for such river basin, sub-basin, or reach located within the district. The district would be required to notify the department on or before October 1 of its intention to develop an integrated management plan which shall be developed and adopted according to sections 46-715 to 46-717 and subsections (1) and (2) of section 46-718.
- **LB 782 -- Change provisions relating to the issuance of distinctive license plates for governmental units. Fischer.** Eliminates a state, municipal, school and county plates and creates a governmental license and trailer plate for all state and local governmental units.
- **LB 785 -- Provide an exception to required approval for certain water transfers. Carlson.** Creates a one-time exemption from title searches for groundwater transfers of 4 acres or less.
- **LB 798 -- Extend the termination date for the Nebraska Litter Reduction and Recycling Act. Langemeier.** The bill extends the termination date for the Nebraska Litter Reduction and Recycling Act from October 30, 2010 to October 10, 2015.
- **LB 815 -- Change requirements for the Taxpayer Transparency Act. Haar.** Adds to the budget forms for political subdivisions a reporting requirement of all private donations, gifts, or grants in the past two fiscal years and estimated to be received in the current and ensuing fiscal years and the source, allocation, and expenditure of such money which was received in increments of one thousand dollars or more.
- **LB 826 -- Adopt the County Consolidation Act. Pahls.** Creates a legislative planning committee to develop a plan that will reduce the number of counties in Nebraska to approximately thirty by 2018. The committee would work with the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee of the Legislature to develop the legislation.
- **LB 832 -- Eliminate a private insurance requirement relating to petroleum release remedial action. Fischer.** The bill eliminates the private insurance requirement relating to petroleum release remedial action.

Committees – There were no elections for committee chairs as those were established last session and during the special session in November after Senator Friend resigned. Senator Friend was the chair of the Urban Affairs Committee, Senator Amanda McGill now chairs that committee. The Standing Committee chairs and assignments are as follows:

Agriculture Committee. Meets: Tuesdays in Room 2102. **Chairperson:** Senator Tom Carlson. **Members:** Sens. Brenda Council, M.L. Dierks, Annette Dubas, Russ Karpisek, Scott Price, Ken Schilz, and Norman Wallman.

Appropriations Committee Meets: Mondays and Tuesdays in Room 1524; Wed., Thurs. and Fridays in Room 1003. **Chairperson:** Senator Lavon Heidemann. **Members:** Sens., Danielle Conrad, Tony Fulton, Tom Hansen, John Harms, Heath Mello, John Nelson, Jeremy Nordquist, and John Wightman.

Banking Committee. Meets: Mondays and Tuesdays in Room 1507. **Chairperson:** Senator Rich Pahls. **Members:** Sens. Mark Christensen, Mike Gloor, Chris Langemeier, Beau McCoy, Dave Pankonin, Pete Pirsch, and Dennis Utter.

Business & Labor Committee. Meets: Mondays in Room 2102. **Chairperson:** Senator Steve Lathrop. **Members:** Sens. Tom Carlson, Brenda Council, Amanda McGill, Ken Schilz, Norman Wallman, and Tom White

Education Committee. Meets: Mondays and Tuesdays in Room 1525. **Chairperson:** Senator Greg Adams. **Members:** Sens. Brad Ashford, Bill Avery, Abbie Cornett, Robert Giese, Ken Haar, Gwen Howard, and Kate Sullivan.

General Affairs Committee. Meets: Mondays in Room 1510. **Chairperson:** Senator Russ Karpisek. **Members:** Sens. Colby Coash, Tanya Cook, M.L. Dierks, Annette Dubas, Bob Krist, Scott Price, and Kent Rogert.

Government, Military & Veterans Affairs Committee. Meets: Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays in Room 1507. **Chairperson:** Senator Bill Avery. **Members:** Sens. Robert Giese, Charlie Janssen, Russ Karpisek, Bob Krist, Rich Pahls, Scott Price, and Kate Sullivan.

Health and Human Services Committee. Meets: Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays in Room 1510. **Chairperson:** Senator Tim Gay. **Members:** Sens. Kathy Campbell, Mike Gloor, Gwen Howard, Dave Pankonin, Arnie Stuthman, and Norm Wallman.

Judiciary Committee. Meets: Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays in Room 1113 **Chairperson:** Senator Brad Ashford. **Members:** Sens. Mark Christensen, Colby Coash, Brenda Council, Steve Lathrop, Scott Lautenbaugh, Amanda McGill, and Kent Rogert.

Natural Resources Committee. Meets: Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays in Room 1525 **Chairperson:** Senator Chris Langemeier. **Members:** Sens. Tom Carlson, Tanya Cook, Annette Dubas, Debra Fischer, Ken Haar, Beau McCoy, and Ken Schilz.

Nebraska Retirement Systems Committee. Meets: At the call of the chairperson in Room 1525 **Chairperson -** Senator Dave Pankonin. **Members:** Sens. Lavon Heidemann, Russ Karpisek, LeRoy Loudon, Heath Mello, and Jeremy Nordquist.

Revenue Committee. Meets: Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays in Room 1524 **Chairperson:** Senator Abbie Cornett. **Members:** Sens. Greg Adams, M.L. Dierks, Galen Hadley, LeRoy Loudon, Pete Pirsch, Dennis Utter, and Tom White

Transportation Committee. Meets: Mondays and Tuesdays in Room 1113. **Chairperson:** Senator Debra Fischer. **Members:** Sens. Kathy Campbell, Tim Gay, Galen Hadley, Charlie Janssen, Scott Lautenbaugh, LeRoy Loudon, and Arnie Stuthman

Urban Affairs Committee. Meets: Tuesdays in Room 1510. **Chairperson:** Senator Amanda McGill. **Members:** Sens. Colby Coash, Tanya Cook, Bob Krist, Steve Lathrop, Kent Rogert, and Tom White.

Washington DC Meeting March 6-10, 2010 - Make plans now to attend the NRDs Annual Washington DC meeting, March 6-10, 2010. Meeting registration will be provided shortly and will need to be returned to NARD before February 12th. Tentative agenda includes meetings at Embassy Suites, Monday and Tuesday March 8 – 9, and meetings with Nebraska Congressional Delegation Wednesday March 10th. Check out the website www.nrdnet.org for further information.