



NORTH PLATTE
Natural Resources District

Press Release

100547 Airport Rd, PO Box 280 Scottsbluff, NE 69363-0280
PH: 308-632-2749 FAX: 308-632-4346 www.npnrd.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information please contact John Berge or David Wolf, 632-2749

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North Platte NRD Receives \$900,000 Grant for Retirement Programs

General Manager John Berge of the North Platte Natural Resources District (NRD) is pleased to announce its award of a \$900,000 grant from the Natural Resources Commission's Water Sustainability Fund. The NRD was one of only three large projects to be funded. The grant will be used to help the NRD meet its goals and objectives under its Integrated Management Plan (IMP). The NRD's match will be \$600,000 spread out over two years.

"This is a huge step toward a total goal of \$3.75 million we anticipate using in the program to retire 1,000 acres of groundwater. This will result in a 1000-acre-foot credit to the river," stated Berge.

The goal of the program is to permanently retire 1,000 acres of groundwater irrigation in the overappropriated portion of the District. The grant will be distributed over the fiscal years of 2016 and 2017. The balance of the funds, \$2.15 million, will be sought through other grant opportunities. Acres will be targeted throughout the overappropriated portions of the District, including the Pumpkin Creek area and will be dispersed to avoid heavily impacting revenue streams for local taxing authorities.

The NRD has instituted a variety of methods to help reach its IMP obligations, including allocations, water reduction incentives programs, promotion of alternative crops, no-tillage practices, and voluntary water retirements. All of these measures have been used to help meet

the first increment under its IMP of 8,000 acre-feet back to the North Platte River by 2019. It will also be used to help meet obligations in future increments.

The Water Sustainability Fund was signed into law in 2014 and provides financial assistance in programs or projects that promote healthy watersheds, improves water quality, and protects the water resources for future generations. Administered by the Natural Resources Commission, the 23-member board has both elected representatives and members appointed by the Governor. They represent many different water interests throughout the state. The Fund has an annual appropriation of \$11 million.

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