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*Natural Resources District*

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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For Immediate Release

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### **TBNRD Approves Phase 2 Water Quantity Designation for Grant Township**

Grant Township (5N-13W) in eastern Kearney County has been designated Phase 2 for groundwater quantity management by directors of Tri-Basin Natural Resources District (TBNRD). Tri-Basin NRD directors revisited the issue after a public hearing held in June and a delay of the decision in September. Grant Township was included in Phase 2 because groundwater levels there have dropped to more than five feet below 1981-1985 average ground water levels. Under Phase 2, irrigators in Grant Township will have three years to install flowmeters on all wells and no certified irrigated acres may be transferred into the township.

Several landowners from eastern Kearney County attended the meeting to express opinions about the Phase 2 designation. The general consensus was one of understanding the need for monitoring water levels yet expressing concern over possible future water pumping restrictions in the area. Dave Nelson, landowner in Grant Township and former TBNRD board member, commented, "Water is the most valuable asset on this earth."

The district is working on several projects to recharge groundwater supplies in eastern Kearney County. A series of at least three groundwater recharge structures will be constructed along Sand Creek. Also, TBNRD directors are committed to completing the Joint IMP with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (NDNR) and Little Blue NRD as a step toward improving coordination of groundwater management between the two districts. Finally, Tri-Basin and Little Blue NRDs are working with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to conduct an in-depth geologic study to determine groundwater recharge rates in Kearney and Adams Counties.

In other action, Tri-Basin NRD directors approved the final version of the Republican Basin-wide Management Plan. This plan is the culmination of nearly four years of work by stakeholders in Tri-Basin NRD, Lower Republican NRD, Middle Republican NRD, and Upper Republican NRD, with assistance from NDNR and NRD staff. Other NRDs involved in developing the plan are in the process of approving it.

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