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Middle Republican Natural Resources District

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Annual Southwest NE Water Conference March 4

CURTIS, NEBRASKA – Local irrigators, producers, and bankers are invited to the 24th annual Southwest Nebraska Water Conference, set for Thursday, March 4, 2010, at the Red Willow County Fairgrounds Community Building in McCook. The conference will begin at 9 AM, with registration opening at 8:30 AM; this event is free and no pre-registration is necessary.

The 2010 Southwest Nebraska Water Conference kicks off the decade by “Learning From The Past and Looking To The Future.” This year's conference focuses on current challenges facing agricultural producers and the future outlook for irrigators in the Republican Basin.

Conference topics and speakers will include integrated management plans with Jason Kepler and Jim Schneider of the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources; an update on Republican River Basin surface water supplies with Marv Swanda of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation; the relationship between public power and irrigation, with representatives from area public power districts; and preliminary study findings regarding riparian vegetation water use with Dr. Derrel Martin. The day will close with a question and answer forum of the two District 44 senate seat candidates.

Sponsors for this year's event are UNL Extension in Red Willow County, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, The Republican River Water Conservation and Education Coalition and the Middle Republican NRD. Lunch will be provided by Red Willow County NRCS. There will also be several vendors exhibiting, and door prizes will be given away throughout the conference.

The Southwest Nebraska Water Conference began in 1987 as a means to educate irrigators who had water quality problems. During the late 1990s, the conference served to update people on the progress of the *Kansas v. Nebraska* lawsuit. In the coming years, the conference will focus on integrated management, bringing to the table the combination of information and practical application suggestions that irrigators and professionals can implement in their businesses.

Contact the Middle Republican NRD at (800) 873-5613 with questions.