



220 Center Ave.
PO Box 81
Curtis, NE 69025

Phone: 800 -873-5613
Fax: 308 -367-4285
Email: kgall@mrnr.org

Middle Republican Natural Resources District

May 17, 2006
For Immediate Release

NRD Plans Public Hearing for Revisions to Ground Water Rules

Curtis– Revisions to rules and regulations for the Ground Water Management Area will not change the allocations that are set through the 2007 crop year.

The revisions, which were reviewed at the May 9 NRD Board Meeting in McCook, were based on the following recommendations made by the district's groundwater committee:

- Establish an incentive program funded by local funds (using up to an additional 1 cent of levy authority).
- Water transfer could be denied based on the inability of the well transferring the acres to pump the water.
- New industrial uses shall be granted a consumptive use of 80.65 acre-feet per year. Allocation over and above this amount shall be the responsibility of the user and shall be obtained by discontinuing an existing certified use.
- Use base allocations for supplemental wells on surface water instead of surface water delivered.

Manager Dan Smith said, "We consider these revisions as minor in nature and primarily clarifying administrative issues. Allocations will be reviewed at a later date and necessary revisions may be made if warranted. We continue to hope that incentive programs will retire enough acres to minimize any future changes in allocations."

The current Ground Water Management Area Rules and Regulations were adopted by the Middle Republican NRD Board of Directors on November 9, 2004 and became effective January 1, 2005. The purpose of this management area is to protect ground water quantity and to prevent or resolve conflicts between users of ground water and appropriators of surface water, which ground water and surface water are hydrologically connected, through implementation of the goals and objectives identified in the Integrated Management Plan.

Smith pointed out that the Integrated Management Plan adopted when the Management Area Rules and Regulations were adopted has not changed. These revisions will not adversely impact that plan. The plan and the rule revisions will continue to assist the State of Nebraska in maintaining compliance with the Republican River Compact. The revisions are in line with the goal of that plan.

A full copy of the revisions is available by contacting the NRD at 367-4281 or they are listed on the NRD website at www.mrnrd.org.

The Middle Republican Natural Resources District will hold a public hearing for the purpose of receiving testimony with regard to proposed amendments to the rules and regulations for the Ground Water Management Area for the Middle Republican Natural Resources District. The hearing will be at the American Legion Building at 214 Center Avenue in Curtis, Nebraska on June 13th 2006 at 7:00 P.M. Written testimony may be sent to the Middle Republican Natural Resources District at PO Box 81, Curtis, Nebraska, 69025. Written testimony will be accepted until the close of the hearing on June 13th 2006. The revisions will be considered at the regular board meeting following the hearing.

Other district programs were reviewed at the meeting:

- Assistant Manager Bob Merrigan reported that meter repairs have been completed.
- The Middle Republican NRD has 11,838.7 acres are signed up in the CREP. On the last report, there were approximately 40,000 acres signed up basin-wide.
- Repairs on the District's P-2 Watershed dam were completed. Most of the other dams are in good condition.

- Chemigation inspections are starting.

Information and Education Coordinator Kara Gall reported on the State Envirothon. Wauneta-Palisade won the competition. This team will represent Nebraska in the Canon Envirothon in Winnipeg, Canada in July. Hayes Center and Medicine Valley also attended the competition, placing 4th and 8th respectively. The board approved a motion to offer sponsorship to the Wauneta-Palisade team for their trip to Canada.

NRCS District Conservationist Doug Whisenhunt presented the NRCS report. NRCS staff is busy conducting compliance checks. The Middle Republican NRD is third-ranked in dollars spent in federal projects. Whisenhunt gave a breakdown by county of acres funded. The District had 89 unfunded EQIP applications. Whisenhunt attended the newly formed Southwest Nebraska Weed Management Area meeting held in McCook. The group plans to apply for funding from the Environmental Fund Trust Fund.

The next regular meeting will be on June 13 at 8:00 p.m. at the Legion Hall in Curtis, Nebraska.

Full text of the meeting minutes, kept current, is available during regular business hours at the NRD office in Curtis or on the web at www.mrnrd.org.

#####

For more information contact: Kara Gall
Information and Education Coordinator