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Middle Republican Natural Resources District

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For Immediate Release

Special groundwater projects the focus of upcoming Southwest NE Water Conference

(Curtis, NE) – Local irrigators, producers, and bankers are invited to attend the 21st annual Southwest Nebraska Water Conference held Thursday, March 1, 2007 at the Red Willow County Fairgrounds Community Building in McCook. Registration will begin at 8:30 AM with the first session starting at 9:00 AM.

This year's conference focuses on the many special projects and initiatives undertaken in the last year to address groundwater management in the district. These projects, which leveraged over \$3.1 million basin-wide, include: surface water buyout, a pocket irrigation guide, remote meter reading, EQIP Irrigated Acre Retirement, a Riparian River project, and a Republican River Augmentation Appraisal Study.

Representatives from Senator Ben Nelson's office, the University of Nebraska — Lincoln, SunOpta, Southwest Nebraska RC&D, and the Middle and Upper Republican NRDs will talk about projects that utilize both innovative and traditional strategies to better manage the water we have and to send water downstream

District producers Frank and Patricia Stehno will be honored as the recipients of the 2006 Middle Republican NRD Honor Conservation Award.

Lunch will be provided by the Middle Republican NRD for all who attend. Sponsors for this year's conference are Red Willow County and Frontier County Extension, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, The Republican River Water Conservation and Education Coalition and the Middle Republican NRD.

Conference exhibitors include: Great Plains Meter, Senninger Irrigation, Southwest Implement & Reinke, SunOpta, Valley Pro, Moorhous Irrigation & Supply, Corey Irrigation & Subsurface Drip, Nebraska Forest Service, Tri City Meters, and the Middle & Upper Republican NRDs.

The Southwest Nebraska Water Conference began in 1987 as a means to educate irrigators who had water quality problems. During the lawsuit with Kansas, the conference served to update people on the progress of the lawsuit. In the coming years, the conference aims to educate producers 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.

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