



2nd Annual URNRD Water Conference

“H₂Overview – Local to National Water Matters”

March 27 at the Chase County Fairgrounds in Imperial, NE

Presentations from local, regional and national water policy, legal and technical experts

Free event and lunch, soil moisture probe vendors on hand

RSVP to dfranck@urnrd.org or 308-882-5173

8:30 a.m. MT – Registration/Visit with Exhibitors

9 a.m. – Welcome and Overview

Jasper Fanning, PhD, Upper Republican NRD General Manager

9:15 a.m. – Lawsuits and Legal Issues in the Republican Basin

Justin Lavene, Bureau Chief, Nebraska Attorney General Office’s Bureau of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources

Multiple lawsuits filed by surface water irrigation districts and surface water users in the Republican River Basin challenge the state’s administration of their water rights for Republican River Compact compliance. The lawsuits continue to move through the court system with the potential to alter how surface water and groundwater are managed in the basin.

10 a.m. - What’s Bubbling Up in Water Management in States other than Nebraska?

Nick Brozovic, PhD, Director of Policy, Robert B. Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute at the University of Nebraska; Associate Professor of Agricultural Economics, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Declining groundwater levels are giving rise to groundwater management policies in California and other states that to date have done little to restrict water usage. How are states approaching management schemes and how do they stack up to Nebraska’s groundwater management system overseen by Natural Resources Districts?

10:45 a.m. - Irrigation Efficiency v.s. Sustainability – Confusing Productivity with Aquifer Life

Derrel Martin, PhD, PE, Professor of Biological Systems Engineering, Extension Specialist in Irrigation and Water Resources Engineering, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Many confuse the improvement in irrigation efficiency often expressed as water productivity (also called water use efficiency and even water footprint) with the sustainability of water resources. Efficiency improvement can enhance profitability, protect water quality and increase

the value of water resources. However, efficiency enhancement does not ensure sustainable development.

11:30 a.m. - A New Path Forward – Kansas Perspective on Recent Compact Agreements

Jackie McClaskey, PhD, Kansas Secretary of Agriculture

Recent agreements attempting to achieve a “win-win” between Kansas and Nebraska regarding the Republican River Compact were the outcome of years of meetings and negotiations, cooperation between the two states, and recognition that common sense solutions were achievable.

12:15 p.m. – Catered Lunch, Jack’s Country Cookin’ Presentations from moisture probe vendors

Thank you to our sponsors!



1:30 p.m. - Republican River Compact Breakthrough – Nebraska’s Perspective on Recent Compact Agreements with Kansas

Jesse Bradley, Assistant Director, Nebraska Department of Natural Resources

After years of litigation and difficult decisions on how to comply with the Republican River Compact, Nebraska is on a promising new compliance track aided by cooperative agreements with Kansas, and improved tools and options providing flexibility. It’s led to greater certainty and predictability for producers in the Basin. What do the agreements mean for the Basin and Nebraska, and what challenges lie ahead?

2:15 p.m. – Capitol View of Natural Resources Issues

Nebraska State Senator Dan Hughes, Legislative District 44

As the new chairman of the Legislature’s Natural Resources Committee, Sen. Dan Hughes of Venango is the point person for all water and natural resources related legislative issues. Water, wind energy and tough budget discussions, among other items, are on his plate as he leads arguably the most important committee to farmers in our region.

3 p.m. - USDA/NRCS Water Efficiency Programs Overview

Andy Keep, NRCS District Conservationist for Dundy, Chase, and Perkins Counties

An update and overview of multiple programs that provide farmers and ranchers cost share for practices that make water use more efficient.