



The Nebraska Environmental Trust

preserving NATURAL NEBRASKA™ for future generations

Dave Heineman, Governor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Little Blue NRD Receives Grant from Nebraska Environmental Trust

Lincoln, NE – April 1, 2010 – Little Blue Natural Resources District (LBNRD) announced today that it will receive \$12,000 from the Nebraska Environmental Trust for the “Irrigation Technology to Improve Irrigation Management”. The Trust Board announced funding for the project at its meeting on April 1, 2010 in Lincoln. This is the third and final year of award with funding totaling \$43,700. The project is one of the 88 projects receiving \$14,970,328 in grant awards from the Nebraska Environmental Trust this year.

The funding will be used to acquire cost-share monies for the purchase of soil moisture equipment to help producers determine when irrigation is needed. The LBNRD has five Water Quality Sub-Areas developed to curb nitrate leaching and has been actively working with communities on Wellhead Protection Management with 20 communities within the District having "State Approved" Wellhead Protection Plans. The concern is that some of these communities' municipal wells nitrate levels have exceeded the drinking water limit of 10 PPM.

The LBNRD has emphasized soil sampling and applying the correct amount of nitrogen when fertilizing crop ground. This past year, the LBNRD was blessed with nearly adequate rainfall and a full water profile in the soil. Producers had some questions when to start and stop the irrigation. Over-watering has been a concern since the invention of irrigation. If the producers are putting on more water than needed, leaching of nitrates into aquifer will potentially occur. The LBNRD board is proceeding with a pro-active approach to assist the producers in irrigation management so trends in nitrate levels can decrease.

This equipment will be used in a variety of settings from croplands, rangelands and lawns. The equipment can assist with decreasing nitrate and pesticide leaching and conserving water, especially in Wellhead Protection Management Areas. The equipment includes soil moisture sensors and meters, data loggers, ET (evapotranspiration) gauges, and soil probes.

The Nebraska Legislature created the Nebraska Environmental Trust in 1992. Using revenue from the Nebraska Lottery, the Trust has provided over \$157 million in grants to 1,231 projects across the state. Anyone – citizens, organizations, communities, farmers and businesses – can apply for funding to protect habitat, improve water quality and establish recycling programs in Nebraska. The Nebraska Environmental Trust works to preserve, protect and restore our natural resources for future generations.

The Little Blue NRD has cost share money available for producers to obtain this equipment. If interested contact the NRD staff at (402) 364-2145 by May



Daryl Andersen accepting grant from Mark Bowman

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