Agenda Item: 7

### Memo

To: Programs, Projects and Operations Subcommittee

Subject: Groundwater Management Plan

Eastern Nebraska Water Resources Assessment (ENWRA)

Date: July 27, 2006

From: Gerry Bowen

The District's Groundwater Management Plan was developed in 1994 based on the best scientific information available at the time. The majority of our groundwater activities have been to build a database by gathering water quality and quantity data, but very little information about the basic geology and hydrology of the area.

The Department of Natural Resources (NDNR) has been tasked with determining the status of water use in river basins so that they can make a scientifically-based judgment on whether a basin is fully appropriated. This determination is also based on the best scientific information available.

Unfortunately, the geology and groundwater hydrology in the glaciated regions of Eastern Nebraska is a much more complex system than most of Nebraska and has not been completely studied. Therefore, a group consisting of the Lower Elkhorn NRD, Lower Platte South NRD, Lower Platte North NRD, Nemaha NRD, Lewis and Clark NRD, and the Papio-Missouri River NRD, with the assistance of the NDNR, UN-L Conservation Survey Division (CSD), and the US Geological Survey (USGS) is proposing a project to map the geology and groundwater hydrology of eastern Nebraska. The project has been named the Eastern Nebraska Water Resources Assessment (ENWRA).

The project will establish three pilot study sites in Eastern Nebraska and conduct a series of investigations to determine the best and most efficient methodology to map the geological and groundwater environment. One of the methods being considered is "Helicopter Electromagnetic Surveys" (HEM). A brief presentation about this methodology will be presented at the Subcommittee meeting.

It is proposed that the group apply (LPNNRD is proposed to be the lead agency) for assistance from the Interrelated Water Management Program (IWMP) created by the Legislature in LB 1226 and administered by NDNR. Current guidelines for the IWMP require a 20% match (guidelines for this program are attached). The ENWRA project description is also attached for your information. The project has a three year life span, even though only the first year's funding is being applied for at this time. The IWMP has been funded for the two years in the amount of \$2.5 million per year, however, the Year 1 results may affect the scope of services for Years 2 and 3.

The total cost of Year 1 is estimated to be \$701,000. The NRDs are contributing \$75,000 (\$15,000 from the P-MRNRD and is in the draft FY 07 Budget) to match the request of the \$375,000 from the IWMP. The remaining funds are anticipated from NDNR through its LB962 annual appropriation.

Years two and three will conduct similar investigations at a similar cost estimate.

The group is asking the District to write a support letter (sample attached) for the application. If the funding is approved, an interlocal agreement will be prepared to formalize the workings of the group.

The information to be obtained will greatly benefit the District in its management of groundwater quality and quantity by providing the best scientific information on which to base decisions. It will also assist NDNR in the determination of fully appropriated basins.

Management recommends that the Subcommittee recommend to the Board that the Acting General Manager be authorized to submit a letter of support including a commitment for \$15,000, for the Eastern Nebraska Water Resources Assessment Project.

Nebraska Natural Resources Commission c/o Nebraska Department of Natural Resources 301 Cenntenial Mall South, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor P.O. Box 94676 Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4676

Dear [ Click here and type recipient name ]:

The xxxxxxxxx NRD plans to partner with several NRDs from eastern Nebraska to jointly evaluate, identify additional data needs, and conduct pilot studies to determine the appropriate methodologies to efficiently assess available ground water supplies that will further assist us in managing our water resouces. This partnership will be submitting an application for funding assistance from the Interrelated Water Management Fund from the Nebraska Natural Resouces Commission. We support this application and encourage approval by the Commission.

The xxxxxxxxxx NRD obligates \$\_\_\_\_ in FY 2007 to be used as the local match for the Interrelated Water Management Funds for this application. We anticipate entering into an Interlocal Agreement with the other partners to specify future areas of responsibility as we determine a scope, cost, and benefits of additional studies.

Sincerely,

(name) (title)

xxx/xx

cc: Lower Platte North NRD

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### Eastern Nebraska Water Resources Assessment (ENWRA) Pilot Studies

### Introduction

Eastern Nebraska, an area with 70% of the state's population but limited water supplies, faces mounting pressure to manage its water resources. The need for water is increasing amid rapid population growth and an intensifying drought, but basic hydrogeologic data is lacking. The eastern ~1/5 of Nebraska primarily occupies the glacial drift, or 'glaciated,' ground water region (see attached map). The geology of the glaciated region is complex and not well understood. Aquifers are generally of limited extent, their degree of hydrologic connection with streams and other aquifers is uncertain, and water quality and quantity is highly variable and difficult to predict. In many areas, it is not currently possible to determine the hydrologically connected areas and the lag impacts of ground water wells on streams as required by LB 962. Many NRDs in the glaciated region are in need of additional data to delineate and characterize the aquifers as they designate new ground water management areas. Finally, local governments require information to guide wise water resources development as populations grow and expand.

The Eastern Nebraska Water Resources Assessment (ENWRA) is a cooperative effort between 10 local, state, and federal agencies to develop a three-dimensional geologic framework and water budget for the glaciated region. The funds requested in this proposal will be used to conduct a series of pilot studies to test the effectiveness of potential tools to be used to evaluate, map, and characterize the hydrogeologic system. Since some tools will be more useful than others, each potential tool will need to be tested in a variety of hydrogeologic settings. The proposed pilot study sites are located near Firth, Ashland, and Oakland, Nebraska. Each pilot study site has a different hydrogeologic setting and corresponds to an area with a water resources management problem. The Firth site is located in an upland area with glacial till overlying a major sand and gravel-filled paleovalley aquifer. The degree of hydrologic connection between this aquifer and the streams in the overlying glacial till is uncertain. The aquifer provides water to several public water systems and numerous rural residents. The number of irrigation wells in the aquifer has grown rapidly in recent years, and as a result, part of it has been placed in a well moratorium until the sustainability of its water supplies can be assessed. The Ashland site is an alluvial valley surrounded by glacial and bedrock uplands. It is an area of intense population growth and major municipal and irrigation well development. This area will experience some of the most intense water resources pressure as Lincoln and Omaha grow on both sides. The Oakland site comprises a paleovalley aquifer that rests upon bedrock and intersects the alluvial valley along Logan Creek. The hydrologic connection between Logan Creek and the surrounding uplands is unknown. Over 4,000 people are served by rural water developed in this aquifer, but water supplies are limited and over-pumping can cause deterioration of the water quality.

For each pilot site, existing information will be assembled and additional data needs will be identified. In year 1, geophysical methods will be applied to 1 township (36 mi<sup>2</sup>) at each pilot study site. Test holes and monitoring wells will be installed for 'ground truth' data to support the geophysical interpretations. These methods have been

used in other areas of the United States to map the geology of glacial terrain in 3 dimensions. They offer a potentially powerful tool to develop a geologic framework. From this framework, more advanced methods can be applied. In years 2 and 3, additional methods such as streambed conductance testing, aquifer testing and water quality studies will be completed at the 3 pilot project sites to build upon the initial framework and characterize the hydrologic system.

The knowledge gained from the proposed ENWRA pilot studies will help to address current needs by the DNR, NRDs, public water suppliers, and citizens in these areas. The pilot studies are critical to developing a suite of tools to be used over a larger geographic area. These tools will allow us to reach the long-term goal of understanding the hydrologic system of the entire glaciated region. Such an understanding will provide mutual benefits to the citizens of this region, including to 1) help the Department of Natural Resources determine the extent of hydrologic connection between surface water and ground water in their annual evaluation efforts, 2) assist NRDs in delineating aquifer boundaries and updating their management plans, 3) form a basis for solving water quality and quantity problems, 4) support decisions regarding sustainable development of new and existing water supplies, 5) provide a building block upon which to establish ground water models, 6) help local governments plan for growth and properly assess the financial value of properties, 7) educate and inform the public, and 8) guide future studies.

### **Project Objectives**

- Compile available information for pilot study sites
- Identify additional data needs for pilot study sites
- Test effectiveness of geophysical methods
- Initiate mapping and characterization of pilot project areas
- Identify additional tools for mapping and characterization
- Assemble technical information about potential tools
- Test additional tools for mapping and characterization
- Characterize hydrogeologic system of each pilot study site

### **Project Tasks**

- I. Conduct inventory and assessment
  - a) Objectives
    - Compile available information for pilot study sites
    - Identify additional data needs for pilot study sites
  - b) Specific activities
    - Conduct a literature search for published and unpublished information and prepare a bibliography.
    - Prepare a geographic information system (GIS) and databases for assembled electronic information.
    - Conduct technical review of assembled data to characterize the quality of existing data, identify gaps in data coverage, and determine additional data needs.

### II. Initiate pilot studies

- a) Objectives
  - Test effectiveness of geophysical methods
  - Initiate mapping and characterization of pilot project areas
- b) Specific activities
  - Conduct Geophysical Surveys Helicopter Electromagnetic (HEM) surveys will be applied to 1 township (36 square miles) near each pilot project area. Equipment will be suspended from a helicopter and flown in linear paths, 1/8 mile apart to collect data. The public will be notified prior to the activities.
  - Install Test Holes and Monitoring Wells The geophysical techniques will require test holes for 'ground truth' data. Cores or cuttings will be collected and described by CSD geologists. Each test hole will be logged by geophysical logging equipment. Approximately 18 test holes will be drilled. Approximately 54 monitoring wells will be installed at the locations of some test holes. The county test hole log reports will be updated based on the test hole information.
  - Conduct land-based geophysical surveys These surveys will be used to support HEM data. The surveys will extend away from the test hole locations for 200 feet on either side.
  - Analyze and interpret data A determination will be made regarding the effectiveness of geophysical methods in mapping and characterizing glacial terrain in the study area.

### III. Identify additional tools and methods

- a) Objectives
  - Identify additional tools for mapping and characterization
  - Assemble technical information about potential tools
- b) Specific activities
  - Identify methods and tools Tools will be identified based on their potential ability to map and characterize the geology and hydrology of alluvial sediments, glacial sediments, and bedrock aquifers. Examples of such tools include, but may not be limited to, base flow separation techniques, water quality 'fingerprinting,' test hole drilling, geophysical mapping, land use mapping, water use investigations, hydrographic mapping, surficial geologic mapping, aquifer testing, potentiometric tests of near surface ground water and surface water, evapotranspiration studies, and precipitation gauging.
  - ◆ Assemble technical information Technical information about each tool will be used to assess the feasibility of implementing such tools. Information may include: availability of personnel and technical expertise; costs associated with each method/tool; location and availability of technical service providers; case studies showing the effectiveness of the tool/method in various locations and settings.

### IV. Complete Pilot Studies

- a) Objectives
  - Test additional tools for mapping and characterization

- Characterize hydrogeologic system of each pilot study site
- b) Specific activities
  - ◆ Test available tools Various tools, methods, and techniques identified in part III will be applied to the pilot study sites. Data will be collected and analyzed. A determination will be made regarding the effectiveness of each tool.
  - Map and characterize sites Tools deemed to be most appropriate for each hydrogeologic setting will be applied to the sites to evaluate, map, and characterize the hydrogeologic system.
  - Install Test Holes and Monitoring Wells Additional test holes and monitoring wells will be required as to develop and refine the geologic framework and hydrologic system of each site. Cores or cuttings will be collected and described by CSD geologists. Each test hole will be logged by geophysical logging equipment. Approximately 36 test holes will be drilled. Approximately 100 monitoring wells will be installed at the locations of some test holes. The county test hole log reports will be updated based on the test hole information.

### **Project Timeline**

This is a 3-year project proposal for the completion of 3 pilot studies. The pilot studies will be initiated in year 1. During years 2 and 3, other tools will be tested and additional test holes and monitoring wells will be installed to build upon the basic geologic framework established in year 1. Future studies and efforts beyond year 3 will be aimed at applying the knowledge gained in the pilot studies to other areas in the glaciated region.

TASK	PROPOSED	PROPOSED	
	BEGIN DATE	END DATE	
Inventory and Assessment	10/1/2006	10/1/2007	
literature search	10/1/2006	4/1/2007	
develop GIS and databases	10/1/2006	10/1/2007	
technical review/data gaps	4/1/2007	10/1/2007	
Initiate Pilot Studies	10/1/2006	10/1/2007	
conduct HEM surveys	12/1/2006	5/1/2007	
drill test holes and log wells	10/1/2006	3/1/2007	
install monitoring wells	3/1/2007	6/1/2007	
Conduct land-based geophysics	12/1/2006	5/1/2007	
Analyze and interpret geophysics data	3/1/2007	10/1/2007	
Identify Additional Tools	10/1/2006	10/1/2007	
generate list of tools	10/1/2006	3/1/2007	
assemble technical information	3/1/2007	10/1/2007	
Complete Pilot Studies	10/1/2007	10/1/2009	
test available tools	7/1/2007	10/1/2008	
Map and characterize sites	10/1/2008	10/1/2009	
Install test holes and monitoring wells	10/1/2007	5/1/2009	

### **Partnerships**

The proposed project will be carried out through a Memorandum of Agreement between the Lower Platte North NRD, the Lower Platte South NRD, the Lower Elkhorn NRD, the Papio-Missouri River NRD, the Nemaha NRD, the Lewis & Clark NRD, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Conservation and Survey Division (CSD), the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and the United States Geological Survey (USGS). The Lower Platte North NRD will be the administrative designee for the group.

The tasks associated with the proposed project will be performed by several agencies, including the CSD, USGS, and NRDs. A project coordinator (PC) will be hired to coordinate the study efforts and perform some of the inventory and assessment tasks described above. The following table summarizes the roles and responsibilities of the various agencies involved.

TASK	AGENCY ASSIGNED
Inventory and Assessment	Multiple (Coordinated by PC)
literature search	PC, assisted by USGS, CSD, NRDs
develop GIS and databases	PC
technical review/data gaps	PC, assisted by USGS, CSD, NRDs
Initiate Pilot Studies	Multiple (Coordinated by PC)
conduct HEM surveys	USGS
drill test holes and log wells	CSD
install monitoring wells	CSD, NRDs, PC
Conduct land-based geophysics	USGS
Analyze and interpret geophysics data	USGS
Identify Additional Tools	Multiple (Coordinated by PC)
generate list of tools	PC, assisted by USGS, CSD, NRDs
assemble technical information	PC, assisted by USGS, CSD, NRDs
Complete Pilot Studies	Multiple (Coordinated by PC)
test available tools	USGS, CSD
Map and characterize sites	USGS, CSD
Install test holes and monitoring wells	CSD, NRDs, PC

### **Budget**

TASK	ESTIMATED COST
Inventory and Assessment	
literature search	
Develop GIS and databases	
technical review/data gaps	
Initiate Pilot Studies	\$666,000
conduct HEM surveys	\$300,000
drill test holes and log wells	\$60,000
install monitoring wells	\$156,000
Conduct land-based geophysics	\$150,000
Analyze and interpret geophysics data	(included with costs above)
Identify Additional Tools	
generate list of tools	
assemble technical information	
Other Costs	\$35,000 (6-month salary/costs for PC)

#### **TOTAL YEAR 1**

### \$701,000

Complete Pilot Studies	\$1,330,000
test available tools	\$465,000
Map and characterize sites	\$465,000
Install test holes and monitoring wells	\$400,000
Other Costs	\$140,000 (2-year salary/costs for PC)

### **TOTAL YEARS 2-3**

### \$1,470,000

The following is an estimate of the potential funding for YEAR 1 of this project:

Total Funding from Natural Resources Districts: \$75,000

Lower Platte South NRD (\$20,000)

Lower Platte North NRD (\$15,000)

Lower Elkhorn NRD (\$15,000)

Papio-Missouri River NRD (\$15,000)

Nemaha NRD (\$5,000)

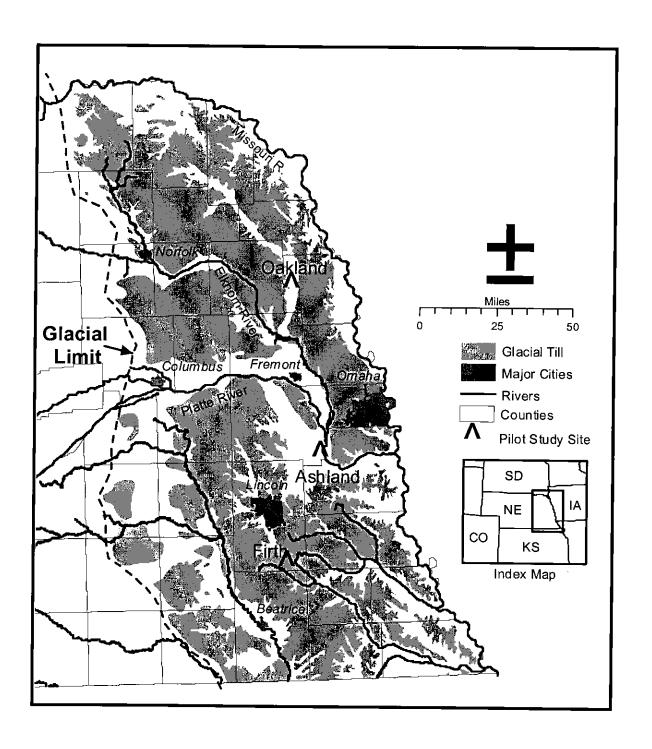
Lewis & Clark NRD (\$5,000)

Integrated Water Management funds (LB 1226): \$375,000

Department of Natural Resources (LB 962 Appropriations): \$251,000

Total: \$701,000

Figure 1 Extent of Glacial Till in Eastern Nebraska and Locations of Pilot Studies



### Guidelines and Limitations

### Interrelated Water Management Plan Program Funds

#### Guidelines

- The Natural Resources Commission (Commission) will develop guidelines, not formal rules.
- The guidelines will be reviewed annually by the Commission and in November of 2006.

### Eligibility

- Only NRDs that agree to provide a minimum local revenue match of at least 20% of the project cost, either cash or in-kind services, will be eligible to receive funding. For purposes of these guidelines in-kind services means providing additional funds to your existing budget to hire staff or buy supplies necessary for implementing activities described in a grant application to the Interrelated Water Management Program. These funds and activities must be described in the grant application.
- In year 2006-2007 the funds will be awarded to NRDs that are involved with the processes defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 46-712, 46-715 or 46-739 or in studies to determine the need for a management plan.

### **Targets for Distributing Funds**

The Commission will not set hard caps on how the funds will be distributed among the NRDs but for FY 06-07, the Commission will strive to distribute 60% of the funds to NRDs that have no designated fully-appropriated or overappropriated areas and that therefore cannot take advantage of the special 3-year levy authorized by Section 2-3225(1)(c).

It is expected that these funds will be obligated within the year the funds are awarded.

### **Priorities in Order of Priority**

- 1. Technical studies needed to make wise decisions on how to manage hydrologically connected surface water and ground water to achieve the purposes of water management planning, such as studies that will:
  - a. Increase our understandings of the connection between surface water and ground water;
  - b. Analyze the economic environmental and or social impacts of management options

- 2. Assist in implementing water management projects that will enhance the benefits derived from available water supplies, including but not limited to
  - a. Flow retiming of augmentation projects;
  - b. Intentional recharge or conjunctive use projects; and
  - c. Assistance in implementing innovative incentive programs, except that no funds shall be expended for the retirement of irrigated acres.

### **Project Duration**

 Projects may be for up to three years, but actual funding will be provided on a yearby-year basis. Projects previously funded by the Program, but not yet complete, will have priority over new projects.

### **Project Funds**

•Grants will be disbursed 60% of the amount needed for this year and the remaining funding for this year will be disbursed on a reimbursable basis. The applications will first be divided into two classes: Class 1 will be those basins that are fully or overappropriated and Class 2 will be those basins that are not yet designated. Ranking based on the priority criteria will be applied to each class separately, but the Commission will have the discretion to redistribute funds between classes.

### **Process**

- Project proposals will be submitted to DNR by August 28, 2006.
- The applications will be divided into two classes: Class 1 will be those basins that are fully or overappropriated and Class 2 will be those basins that are not yet designated.

  Ranking based on the priority criteria will be applied to each class separately, but the Commission will have the discretion to redistribute funds between classes.
- •Project proposals will be submitted to DNR by August 28, 2006.
- When applicable, DNR will convene a technical review committee to evaluate the technical merits of the project.
- The technical review committee may include technical experts from the DNR, the NRDs, the University and other governmental entities such as but not limited to the USGS, or DEQ as appropriate.
- DNR will provide an initial ranking of the projects to the Commissions Program Committee.

- The Program Committee will make the final recommendations of which projects should be funded at what level to the Commission.
- The <u>Natural Resources Commission</u> will make the final decisions.

### Ranking

- In the initial ranking by DNR, points will be given to each project to assist in ranking
  the projects, but the final assignment of points is to be used only as a guide for
  developing the final project ranking list.
- Proposed point assignment
  - o Project that meets

•	priority 1 above	20 points,
	priority 2 above	10 points
	none eliminata project	•

none – eliminate project

Technically

not technically sound – eliminate project

Multiple governmental or private entities involved in the project
 5 points.

• NRD has obtained funding for the project from other sources than Nebraska tax dollars, state or local

5 points.

 Grants will be awarded on a merit basis except extra weight will be given to NRDs that are within 5% of their maximum levy limit

5 points.

Once points are assigned they will be added to determine a final score.

### **Additional Issues**

- There will be no cap on the amount of money funded to a given NRD or project.
- DNR will develop record keeping and reporting requirements and a contract to be signed by the DNR and the NRD.
- Quarterly reports will be required.

# Deadline for Applications August 28, 2006

Project Sponsor(s):		
Project Name:		<del></del>
Total Amount Funds Requested from the Interrel	ated	
Water Management Plan Program Fund (IWMPPF	<b>f</b> ): \$	
Years of funding requested (select one):		1 2 3
Amount Requested from the Fund Year 1:	\$	
Amount of Local Match Offered Year 1 (must equat least 20% of funding requested from the IWMP		
Contact - Name:		
Title:		
Address:		
Daytime Phone:	Fax:	
E-mail:		
ls this a continuation request for a project previou	usly funded by the Comm	ission? YES NO
<b>Project Overview:</b> In 300 words or less provide an ovare asking the Natural Resources Commission to fund only which you seek funding.	erview of the project for which y a portion of the project, indica	you seek funding. If you ate the components for
On behalf of the sponsor(s) named above, I here application, including all attachments, is true, acc	by certify that the informa urate and complete.	tion contained in this
Authorized Signature of Natural Resources District	Title	Date
Typed or Printed Name of Authorized Signatory	Typed or Printed Title	

**IWMPF 2006** 

## Deadline for Applications August 28, 2006

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

# In ten pages or less, provide a discussion of your project. Please include:

#### Introduction

Justification for why the project is needed. Identify any other activities ongoing or planned that relate to the project.

### Project Objectives

Describe the specific objects of the project for which you are seeking grant funds.

### Project Tasks

Identify what activities will be conducted by the project. For technical studies please provide sufficient information on the methods that will be used so that there can be an independent assessment of the ability of these methods to achieve the objectives of the study.

### Project Timeline

For multiyear projects please list what activities are to be completed in each year for which Interrelated Water Management Plan Program Funds are requested.

### Partnerships

Identify the roles and responsibilities of agencies and groups involved in the proposed project regardless of funding source.

### Budget

Identify the cost of the entire project. Costs must be listed in the following tables. Please indicate the source of funds for the project and provide a detailed budget for each major task or work element for which requested grant funds or match funds will be allocated.

## **Deadline for Applications August 28, 2006**

# **APPLICATION BUDGET SUMMARY**

### **SUMMARY for All Years of Project**

(If the project is for one year only, use this only page and delete the following budget pages)

Column A	Column B	Column C	Column D	Column E	Column F
Source of Funds ▶	Interrelated Water Plan Program Funds	Local Match Funds			
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# Interrelated Water Management Plan Program Funds Application Deadline for Applications August 28, 2006

### **BUDGET YEAR: ONE**

(This page is used by multi-year grants only. If your project is not a multi-year grant, then ignore or delete this page.)

Column A	Column B	Column C	Column D	Column E	Column F
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# Deadline for Applications August 28, 2006

### **BUDGET YEAR: TWO**

(This page is used by multi-year grants only. If your project is not a multi-year grant, then ignore or delete this page.)

Column A	Column B	Column C	Column D	Column E	Column F
Source of Funds	Interrelated Water Plan Program Funds	Local Match Funds			
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# Deadline for Applications August 28, 2006

### **BUDGET YEAR: THREE**

(This page is used by multi-year grants only. If your project is not a multi-year grant, then ignore or delete this page.)

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### **Deadline for Applications August 28, 2006**

1.	Have other sources of funding not listed in the Budget Worksheet been approached
	for project support? If yes, name them and explain the outcome of your request.

2. Are all of the matching funds in the Budget Worksheet confirmed? If not, please identify those entities and list the date when confirmation is expected. Explain how you will implement the project if these sources do not confirm participation.

Grant applications and information on grant guidelines and time table can be found on the Department of Natural Resources Web Site: <a href="http://www.dnr.ne.gov">http://www.dnr.ne.gov</a>.

### **Application Submission:**

1. One paper copy of the grant application with the required signatures is to be submitted by **August 28, 2006** to:

Jeremy Gehle Nebraska Department of Natural Resource 301 Centennial Mall South Lincoln, NE 68509-4676

2. One electronic copy is to be emailed by August 28, 2006 to:

Jeremy Gehle at: jgehle@dnr.ne.gov