

# Nebraska Water Sustainability Plan

2014

## LB 940 (Schilz) Appropriations Committee – Hearing on Tuesday, February 18

- one-time cash reserve transfer of \$50 million.

## LB 1046 (Carlson) Appropriations Committee – Hearing on Tuesday, February 18

- general fund annual transfer of \$50 million beginning in 2015.

## LB 1098 (Carlson) Natural Resources Committee – Hearing on February 26

- restructure the Natural Resources Commission, require that NRD caucus elections for commission members be publicized, and require the commission to reconstruct rules and regulations to ensure that the projects it funds promote water sustainability (as defined by the task force) and to require its consultation with other state agencies with obligations and expertise on water funding.
- The Water Funding Task Force (WFTF) supports:
  - A one-time transfer of \$50 million from the cash reserve fund to the Water Sustainability Fund;
  - An annual transfer of \$50 million from the state's general fund to the Water Sustainability Fund;
  - Restructuring the membership of the Natural Resources Commission;
  - The development of new rules and regulations according to the WFTF recommendations; and
  - A plan to phase out the Resources Development Fund and other funds that can be streamlined into the Water Sustainability Fund.

*The WFTF is dedicated to providing a unified message to the Legislature that funding is needed this year to satisfy past obligations and to restructure the state's method of funding water projects.*

### So, what's the plan – just a snapshot?

- We need funds now to put into the current Resources Development Fund for some projects that have already been approved and the state is obligated to fund under statute.
- We need an annual allocation of funds to put into the new Water Sustainability Fund for projects, programs and activities that will be evaluated under a new system and by a restructured Natural Resources Commission and administered by the Department of Natural Resources.
- Focus will be on research and projects that will lead to sustaining our water supply, and projects that have committed local and partner resources and funding will be given additional consideration.
- Continuous planning will be conducted, including all stakeholders, that will keep Nebraska's water sustainable.

### How is the funding process going to work?

- The plan is for local projects sponsors to work together on a project to protect and enhance water productivity.
- The sponsors present their proposal to the restructured Natural Resources Commission.
- The commission evaluates the projects against the criteria developed by the Water Funding Task Force to promote water sustainability.
- If the project meets the strict requirements of the fund, it is partially funded through the Water Sustainability Fund.