



## LOWER PLATTE SOUTH natural resources district

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### **NRD BUDGET ADDRESSES FLOOD CONCERNS**

Lincoln (NE) May 17, 2017 – Several new and on-going construction projects providing flood control are funded in the Fiscal Year 2018 Budget approved Wednesday by the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District Board of Directors. The budget also provides for wellhead protection and groundwater monitoring, cost-sharing with landowners who install conservation improvements, a trail extension, environmental education and a study of ways to better manage water supplies in the Lower Platte River Basin during a drought. The balanced budget of expenditures and revenues, along with the NRD's many partnerships and agreements with other agencies, is a significant part of the NRD's efforts to protect lives, property and the future. The approved budget totals \$25,620,085 or about \$470,000 less than the previous budget. With higher property valuations across the district's six-county area, the property tax requirement of \$9.5 million; a 2.6% increase over a year ago; is expected to result in a lower property tax levy.

The budget contains \$1.16 million for upgrading Lincoln's 50-year-old Salt Creek flood control levees to keep them safe and reliable. A 15-year plan for updating the 13-miles of levees and levee structures that protect homes and businesses was recently approved for two years by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

The lower portion of Lincoln's Deadman's Run Watershed, north of UNL's East Campus, is targeted for flood reduction efforts in another proposed project involving USACE. The NRD and the City of Lincoln would also help fund the \$25.5 million proposal. The NRD and the city would each provide \$7.75 million and an additional \$1.7 million is included in the new NRD budget. The project would remove more than 500 homes from the floodplain and has a high benefit-to-cost ratio of \$1.54 in benefits for every \$1.00 spent. The city and the NRD are awaiting USACE approval of the plan.

The NRD plans to spend about \$1.2 million under an agreement with the City of Lincoln that prioritizes needed stormwater management improvements in watersheds throughout the city. Those projects are then completed as funding allows.



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An extension of the Salt Creek Levee Trail will be completed year. The new budget contains \$350,000 to construct the trail along Salt Creek from 14<sup>th</sup> Street, near UNL's Hibner Stadium, to the Salt Creek Bridge near 24<sup>th</sup> & Cornhusker Highway.

The Lower Platte South NRD has teamed-up with several other agencies to find ways to sustain public water supplies in the lower Platte River basin during times of drought. The Lower Platte River Consortium also includes Omaha's Metropolitan Utilities District, Lincoln Water System, Lower Platte North NRD, Papio-Missouri River NRD and the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources. The group is studying long-term water supplies available to the lower Platte River subbasin that would enhance stream flows and aquifer storage for use by public water systems. The new budget designates \$350,000 for the Lower Platte River Drought Contingency Study.

Other projects in the newly-approved budget:

- Completion of Waverly Ash Hollow Dry Dam, \$308,068
- Wellhead Protection Assistance, \$300,000
- Ground Water Monitoring, Assistance and Studies, \$637,000
- Watershed Dam Rehabilitation, \$790,000
- 56<sup>th</sup> & Morton Flood Reduction Project, Lincoln, \$500,000
- Lower Platte River Watershed Restoration Study, \$100,000
- Environmental Education, \$180,000
- Development of a Non-Point Source Pollution Control Plan, \$200,000
- Wetland Projects, Partnerships and Conservation Easements, \$550,000