

Water Resources Advisory Panel Expands; Members to Reconvene in September

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The University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Water Resources Advisory Panel (WRAP) will reconvene meetings on Tuesday, Sept. 16.

WRAP provides valuable and influential guidance to UNL about priority water resources research, education and outreach programs.

Current WRAP members are: **Ann Bleed, P.E. and former director, Nebraska Department of Natural Resources; Mark Brohman, Nebraska Environmental Trust; Brian Dunnigan, Nebraska Department of Natural Resources; Eugene Glock, Cedar Bell Farms; Frank Kwapnioski, Nebraska Public Power District; John Miyoshi, Lower Platte North NRD; Marian Langan, Audubon Nebraska; Mike Linder, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality; Kirk Nelson, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission; Jerry Obrist, City of Lincoln Water System; Lee Orton, Nebraska Well Drillers Association; Jay Rempe, Nebraska Farm Bureau Federation; Ed Schrock, farmer and former state senator; Dennis Strauch, Pathfinder Irrigation District; and Dayle Williamson, Office of Senator Ben Nelson.**

First convened in 2006, WRAP activities began with a statewide survey of research needs. WRAP members used the survey to develop a list of water research priorities, which were reviewed by NU water faculty at a forum in September.

A water faculty retreat was held the following month, when 10 specific research proposals were developed. In December, WRAP ranked the proposals and identified potential funding options.

In 2007 the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources partnered with NU water faculty to submit four proposals to the Nebraska Environmental Trust. As a result, WRAP's top two projects, along with a project informed by the WRAP process, were funded by the Nebraska Environmental Trust and initiated in 2007.

These projects are:

- **Riparian Vegetation Impacts on Water Quantity, Quality, and Stream Ecology**, which documents the complex behavior and response of river systems to riparian vegetation removal. Primary investigators are Durelle Scott, John Lenters, Erkan Istanbuluoglu and Kyle Herrman. The University of Nebraska Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the University of Nebraska Rural Initiative provided initial funding for this project.
- **Quantifying Evaporation, Crop Evapotranspiration, and the Water Balance for Tilled and Untilled Fields**, which measures the annual, seasonal, monthly and weekly evapotranspiration losses from no-till and conventional till fields to determine the surface evaporation difference between the two tillage practices. The primary investigator is Suat Irmak.
- **Enhancing the Value of Water through Management Education**, which provides irrigators, and those advising irrigators, with the knowledge and skills necessary to obtain maximum value from a constrained water supply. This project is led by Ron Yoder.

For project updates and to identify follow-up steps, WRAP will meet on September 16.

The WRAP will also review a new website -

<http://watercenter.unl.edu/researchdb/researchdb.asp> - that features information on the university's water-related research projects. Site visitors can choose to organize the information by political subdivision, topic, or researcher. New information is added to the site as it becomes available.

For more information on WRAP or the research website, phone (402) 472-4977 or email rherpel2@unl.edu.