

WRAP Exploring Critical Issues

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The University of Nebraska–Lincoln’s Water Resources Advisory Panel (WRAP) met April 27 to share information on their own work and learn about other recent developments at UNL.

Prem Paul, UNL Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development, described two efforts that build upon existing and developing partnerships to address critical needs. The first is to understand the impact of climate change; the second is to grow more food with less water.

The growing consensus is that climate change is occurring; and regardless of whether it is caused by humans, humans will have to adapt to whatever conditions a changing climate may bring. In 2008 UNL and the U.S. Geological Survey joined forces to host a climate change workshop and discuss how to partner to better understand, adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change in the Platte River Basin and in the High Plains.

Paul shared copies of the workshop proceedings, *Sustainability in a Time of ClimateChange: Developing an Intensive Research Framework for the Platte River Basin and the High Plains*. These proceedings are also available online at http://research.unl.edu/docs/climatechangereport_final.pdf. They describe how the High Plains region is an excellent natural laboratory to study the effects of climate change.

Growing more food with less water was the focus of a May 4 “The Future of Water for Food” conference. Paul explained how this conference would bring positive attention to UNL water research and lay the groundwork for a global water institute. A conference report will inform university administrators and partners as they secure support and organize the institute.

WRAP members reviewed their website at water.unl.edu/wrap. A members only section features information about projects currently underway, proposals ranked but projects not underway, proposals for consideration, and archives.

WRAP members also reviewed the outcomes of a water quality summit held April 21. The summit was organized by the Water Center so members of WRAP's water quality work group could meet with faculty to discuss research priorities.

Fifteen researchers from departments that included Biology, Natural Resources, Civil Engineering, Biological Systems Engineering, Architecture and Geosciences, discussed WRAP's draft research priorities. Faculty suggested WRAP focus on cross-cutting topics that organize diverse faculty to produce new knowledge of local, state, and national importance.

WRAP members concluded the meeting by agreeing to rank the revised research priorities and water quality research topics developed at the water quality summit. Members then asked to see the more detailed proposals written in response to their first priority list and how research completed or underway corresponds with WRAP's draft research priorities.