

# NEWS RELEASE

Nebraska Department of Natural Resources

301 Centennial Mall South - P.O. Box 94676 - Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4676 - (402) 471-2363

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Tina Kurtz  
Nebraska Dept. of Natural Resources  
402-471-1697

## **Designation of Overappropriated River Basins, Subbasins, or Reaches Pursuant to LB 962**

The Department of Natural Resources has issued an Order Designating Overappropriated River Basins, Subbasins, or Reaches, pursuant to Legislative Bill 962, the new law on the integrated management of surface water and ground water.

The Department's Order designates the Platte River Basin above the Kearney Canal Diversion, the North Platte River Basin, including Pumpkinseed Creek, and the South Platte River Basin, including Lodgepole Creek as overappropriated. The Order includes a description of the geographic area within which the Department has determined that surface water and ground water are hydrologically connected for purposes of the overappropriated designations, and the criteria used to make that determination. As a result of the Order, stays will become effective on September 25, 2004, on new uses of surface water and ground water within the areas described in the Order.

At this point, the Department and each of the affected local Natural Resources Districts must jointly develop an integrated management plan for surface and ground water use. The first stage of an integrated management plan is to bring existing uses of ground water and surface water into line with uses as of July 1, 1997.

LB 962 became effective on July 16, 2004. Under this law the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (Department) is still responsible for the administration of surface water rights and the Natural Resources Districts (NRDs) are still responsible for administering ground water uses.

Previous to July 16, the Department advised the North Platte NRD, South Platte NRD, Central Platte NRD, Twin Platte NRD, and Tri Basin NRD that certain portions of each of those districts were under consideration to be designated as overappropriated in September of 2004.