

September 30, 2013
For Immediate Release

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Nebraska Water Funding Task Force Travels to Sidney, Alliance for Study

The recently formed LB 517 Statewide Water Funding Task Force heads to the Nebraska Panhandle, where it will continue its assessment for a long-term funding plan for Nebraska's water projects to help maintain water sustainability. The next meetings will be October 10 and 11 in Alliance, where Task Force members will tour the North Platte and Upper Niobrara White River Basins, and October 24 and 25 in Sidney, where Task Force Members will continue with plan development.

The Water Funding Task Force was created by the Nebraska Legislature in June 2013. The Task Force includes 16 members of the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission, 11 citizens appointed by Governor Heineman, six state senators and the director of the Department of Natural Resources. All are working together to address Nebraska's future water challenges.

The Task Force continues to travel across the state to see first-hand the issues facing those who work and live in each of the state's major watersheds (see attached map). Task Force members have toured and held public meetings in a number of basins, which have included the Blue, Missouri, Nemaha, Central Platte, Lower Platte and Republican River Basins. During the tours, Task Force members have gathered input and learned of the challenges facing people who have varied water-related interests. The information gathered will help the group to prioritize goals that will lead to project and funding recommendations.

Task Force members have identified their top priorities as the following:

- Projects that increase water productivity and otherwise maximize the beneficial use of Nebraska's water resources for the benefit of its residents.
- Projects that are cost-effective in achieving the state's water management goals.
- Projects that contribute to multiple water supply management goals, including, but not limited to flood control, agricultural uses, municipal uses, recreation benefits, wildlife habitat, conservation of water resources, and preservation of water resources for future generations.

Task Force information, including future meetings dates and locations can be found at www.dnr.ne.gov/LB517. Task Force members are supported by a consultant team led by Olsson Associates.

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