

# NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Water.

DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

December 31, 2021

Patrick J. O'Donnell, Clerk of the Legislature  
Room 2021 State Capitol  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4904

Re: 2020 Biennial Report of the Nebraska Water Sustainability Fund

Dear Mr. O'Donnell:

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 2-1507(7) requires that a biennial report be made to the Clerk of the Legislature on December 31, 2021, describing the work accomplished by the use of funds towards the goals of the Water Sustainability Fund (WSF). The WSF was created by the 2014 Legislature in LB906, and governance requirements were provided in LB1098.

The following report summarizes the 2020-2021 biennium activities relating to the WSF. If any questions remain about the WSF, members of the Legislature are invited to contact myself or Natural Resources Commission Commissioners, and review the WSF website page at: <https://nrc.nebraska.gov/water-sustainability-fund-0> for additional details.

Respectfully submitted,



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Thomas E. Riley, P.E., Director  
Nebraska Department of Natural Resources



Pete Ricketts, Governor

Thomas E. Riley, P.E., Director

**Department of Natural Resources**

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Natural Resources Commission

## Water Sustainability Fund

Biennial Report to Legislature

2020-2021



The Water Sustainability Fund (WSF) is a source of financial support to help the State of Nebraska achieve the goals set out in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 2-1506. The Nebraska Natural Resources Commission (NRC) oversees WSF operations including selecting successful applications, and the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (NeDNR) oversees administration. Of the funding appropriated by the Nebraska Legislature each year, 10% is designated to projects addressing combined storm and sewer water overflow, and 10% to small project requests of \$250,000 or less.

WSF applications are filed electronically between July 16<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> each year. Once filed, the applications undergo a preliminary review by NeDNR staff and those determined by the Director to be “sufficient” as per Neb. Rev. Stat. § 2-1509(3) are forwarded to the NRC for scoring. Each of the applications may be viewed by clicking the “*Applications with Satisfactory Determination by the Director*” link under the Applications tab at: <https://nrc.nebraska.gov/water-sustainability-fund-0>.

Only applications with the highest scores are funded. Any funds remaining are rolled forward and added to the next legislative appropriation in an attempt to be conservative and wise stewards of taxpayer monies and to encourage that the best project applications be submitted in the next round of funding. The NRC’s scoring process is designed to identify those projects that will provide the most comprehensive benefits as outlined in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 2-1506.

The WSF has completed seven funding cycles between 2015 and 2021. A link to the applications funded during each annual funding cycle may be viewed by clicking on the “*WSF Projects Funded*” under the Applications tab at: <https://nrc.nebraska.gov/water-sustainability-fund-0>. In addition, the project sponsor’s annual reports for each project may be viewed by clicking on “*Water Sustainability Fund Annual and Final Reports*” under the Reports tab at: <https://nrc.nebraska.gov/water-sustainability-fund-0>.

In 2020, 6 projects were approved for a total of \$5,580,902; and in 2021, 12 projects were approved for a total of \$14,602,654.77. The following is a table of the projects funded:

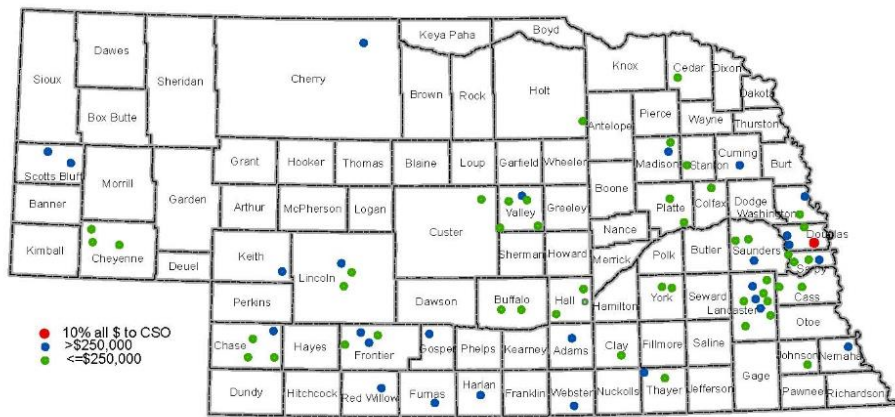
| 2020-2021 Biennium     |           |  |                     |                     |     |
|------------------------|-----------|--|---------------------|---------------------|-----|
| WSF Application Funded |           |  |                     |                     |     |
| APP #                  | Applicant | Projects                                   | Allocation          | Obligation          | Cap |
| 5308                   | Omaha     | Combined Sewer Overflow Program            | \$ 1,086,503.30     | \$ 1,086,503.30     |     |
| 5309                   | Omaha     | Combined Sewer Overflow Program            | \$ 1,086,503.30     | \$ 1,086,503.30     |     |
|                        |           |  | \$ 2,173,006.60     | \$ 2,173,006.60     |     |
| App No                 |           | Small (≤ \$250,000) Project Name           | \$ Amount Allocated | \$ Amount Obligated |     |
| 5283                   | SPNRD     | WWUM Dashboard App                         | 240,000.00          | 240,000.00          |     |
| 5301                   | URNRD     | URNRD Soil Moisture Probe                  | 123,840.00          | 123,840.00          |     |
| 5304                   | TPNRD     | TPNRD Aquifer Monitoring                   | 249,990.00          | 249,990.00          |     |
| 5303                   | Papio NRD | Papio & LPN NRD's 3D AEM Framework         | 168,000.00          | 168,000.00          |     |
| 5312                   | ENWRA     | ENWRA GW Recharge Mapping                  | 144,000.00          | 144,000.00          |     |
| 5311                   | LPSNRD    | LPSNRD 3-D Hydrologic Framework            | 247,500.00          | 247,500.00          |     |
| 5313                   | LLNRD     | LLNRD Nance County Aquifer Mapping         | 250,000.00          | 250,000.00          |     |
| 5321                   | Lincoln   | Lincoln Water Supply Arsenic Study         | 145,000.00          | 145,000.00          |     |
| 5322                   | UBBNRD    | UBBNRD Nitrate Accumulation Study          | 167,553.00          | 167,553.00          |     |
| 5316                   | Papio NRD | Papio's IMP GW Quantity Monitoring         | 243,000.00          | 243,000.00          |     |
| 5319                   | TPNRD     | TPNRD Data Collection & Modeling - Phase 2 | 132,090.00          | 132,090.00          |     |
|                        |           |  | \$ 2,110,973.00     | \$ 2,110,973.00     |     |

| App No |        | Large (↑\$250,000) Project Name              | \$ Amount Allocated | \$ Amount Obligated | \$ Amount of Cap Utilized |
|--------|--------|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 5253   | LPSNRD | Deadmans Run Flood Reduction- LPSNRD         |                     | 2,564,141.04        |                           |
| 5306   | Peru   | Peru Water Supply                            | 2,441,400.00        | 2,441,400.00        |                           |
| 5269   | NPPD   | NPPD's SP Supply Canal Restoration           | 2,357,672.00        | 2,357,672.00        |                           |
| 5323   | MNNRD  | MNNRD Bone & Lone Pine Watershed Improvement | 894,660.00          | 894,660.00          |                           |
| 5315   | MRNRD  | MRNRD Map & Model for Water Balance          | 1,222,899.17        | 1,222,899.17        |                           |
| 5317   | CNPPID | CNPPID Elwod Siphon                          | 8,982,946.00        | 7,674,502.83        | \$ 1,308,443.17           |
|        |        |  | \$ 15,899,577.17    | \$ 17,155,275.04    | \$ 1,308,443.17           |
|        |        | Grand Total                                  | \$ 20,183,556.77    | \$ 21,439,254.64    | \$ 1,308,443.17           |

Below is a map showing the project sponsor's location in an effort to demonstrate the NRC's intent to deliver long term equitable statewide distribution of funding as required under Neb. Rev. Stat § 2-1507(1) through the WSF. Two things should be noted: most of the approved projects scored highly because they provided multiple benefits to a broad area of the state; and funding can't be awarded in some areas of the state until a project sponsor submits an application within that region.



### Water Sustainability Fund Approved Projects



Updated 12/17/2021

During the biennium, several projects were completed and formally closed-out. Detailed final project summary reports are filed by project sponsors and can be viewed at: <https://nrc.nebraska.gov/water-sustainability-fund-reports>. Funding remaining when projects are completed under budget is made available by the NRC to help fund future applications. The following table lists the projects completed during this biennium and summarizes those returning funds.

| <b>2020 - 2021 Biennium</b>                       |            |                 |                |                 |         |
|---|------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|---------|
| <b>WSF Project Closeouts and Grant Reductions</b> |            |                 |                |                 |         |
| App No.   | Year Filed | Approved Grant  | Grant Released | Final Grant     | Sponsor |
| 4121  | 2015       | \$ 235,500.00   | \$ -           | \$ 235,500.00   | SPNRD   |
| 4122  | 2015       | \$ 900,000.00   | \$ 58,050.00   | \$ 841,950.00   | LENRD   |
| 4126  | 2015       | \$ 64,200.00    | \$ 2,100.00    | \$ 62,100.00    | Papio   |
| 4162  | 2016       | \$ 164,400.00   | \$ 63,853.41   | \$ 100,546.59   | Howells |
| 5189  | 2017       | \$ 1,968,000.00 | \$ -           | \$ 1,968,000.00 | ENWRA   |
| 5197  | 2017       | \$ 389,820.00   | \$ 116,189.64  | \$ 273,630.36   | LBNRD   |
| 5198  | 2017       | \$ 205,068.00   | \$ -           | \$ 205,068.00   | NPPD    |
| 5206  | 2018       | \$ 250,000.00   | \$ -           | \$ 250,000.00   | LLNRD   |
| 4118  | 2015       | \$ 151,680.00   | \$ -           | \$ 151,680.00   | CPNRD   |
| 4124  | 2015       | \$ 249,900.00   | \$ -           | \$ 249,900.00   | CPNRD   |
| 4146  | 2016       | \$ 100,979.00   | \$ 2,587.60    | \$ 98,391.40    | LBNRD   |
| 4147  | 2016       | \$ 100,153.00   | \$ 34,493.38   | \$ 65,659.62    | LBNRD   |
| 4164  | 2016       | \$ 247,437.60   | \$ 51.78       | \$ 247,385.82   | LPSNRD  |
| 5188  | 2017       | \$ 87,540.00    | \$ 151.28      | \$ 87,388.72    | CPNRD   |
| 5193  | 2017       | \$ 120,000.00   | \$ -           | \$ 120,000.00   | Papio   |
| 5222  | 2018       | \$ 86,400.00    | \$ -           | \$ 86,400.00    | URNRD   |
| 5238  | 2019       | \$ 420,000.00   | \$ -           | \$ 420,000.00   | Papio   |
| 5241  | 2019       | \$ 105,000.00   | \$ -           | \$ 105,000.00   | UBBNRD  |
| 5255  | 2019       | \$ 236,100.00   | \$ 34.50       | \$ 236,065.50   | NNRD    |
| TOTAL   |            | \$ 6,082,177.60 | \$ 277,511.59  | \$ 5,804,666.01 |         |

After reviewing seven rounds of project proposals, it is clear that the state needs to continue funding projects that support the sustainable use of and management for water quality, quantity, and infrastructure needs remains as important today as it was when LB 1098 was implemented in 2014. The following table tracks the unmet funding demand of project sponsor's seeking cost share assistance to provide these types of projects.

| Unmet Funding Demand |              |                   |              |                  |                   |
|----------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Year                 | Applications | Amount            | Applications | Amount           | Unmet             |
| Filed                | Filed        | Requested         | Funded       | Granted          | Demand            |
| 2015                 | 27           | \$ 50,853,853.00  | 17           | \$ 8,590,502.00  | \$ 42,263,351.00  |
| 2016                 | 34           | \$ 45,435,963.17  | 11           | \$ 19,529,667.30 | \$ 25,906,295.87  |
| 2017                 | 24           | \$ 20,305,164.00  | 13           | \$ 10,682,546.00 | \$ 9,622,618.00   |
| 2018                 | 18           | \$ 17,397,798.00  | 10           | \$ 7,802,649.00  | \$ 9,595,149.00   |
| 2019                 | 19           | \$ 28,638,105.10  | 12           | \$ 17,865,005.10 | \$ 10,773,100.00  |
| 2020                 | 8            | \$ 5,746,983.00   | 6            | \$ 5,580,902.00  | \$ 166,081.00     |
| 2021                 | 17           | \$ 36,003,133.77  | 12           | \$ 14,602,654.77 | \$ 21,400,479.00  |
|                      | TOTAL        | \$ 204,381,000.04 |              | \$ 84,653,926.17 | \$ 119,727,073.87 |

DATED: 29 December 2021




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Thomas E. Riley, P.E., Director  
Nebraska Department of Natural Resources