

## **Republican River Water Conservation District**

### **Water Activity Enterprise**

The 2019 well retirement program is an **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** through the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) in which the large capacity water right is permanently retired and the applicant is allowed to use the acreage for dryland farming or for grazing.

1. Application begins at the NRCS office. The land being enrolled in the program must have been irrigated two (2) out of the last five (5) years just prior to enrollment, must be within the boundary of the RRWCD and must be owned by the current owner or entity at the time of application.
2. After the applicant receives an offer from the NRCS for an EQIP contract, the applicant should contact the RRWCD staff to determine eligibility for an RRWCD Water Activity Enterprise supplemental contract and determine what funding is available. Applicant has 30 days after signing an NRCS contract in which to sign a contract with the RRWCD in order to qualify for RRWCD Water Activity Enterprise funding.
3. The RRWCD requires the following documents for an OAI application:
  - a. Copy of the well permit,
  - b. Copy of the deed for the land where the well is located,
  - c. If the applicant is signing on behalf of another person or entity, legal documentation from that person or entity must be submitted with the application,
  - d. The previous five (5) years of FSA-578 certifications and corresponding maps showing the acres that were irrigated by the well.
4. The RRWCD Water Activity Enterprise pays on the lesser of three values when determining the number of irrigated acres:
  - a. Number of acres allowed on the well permit
  - b. Number of acres assessed as irrigated by the County Assessor the previous year
  - c. Number of acres irrigated two (2) of the last five (5) years according to the FSA cropping records
5. The rate paid by the RRWCD Water Activity Enterprise is \$1,500 per irrigated acre on land irrigated by wells located within the South Fork Focus Zone, and \$600 per irrigated acre on land irrigated by wells located outside the boundaries of the South Fork Focus Zone. (See attached map)
6. If there is a lien on the property, payments from the RRWCD Water Activity Enterprise will be payable to the name of the applicant and the name of the lien holder(s) as the payee.
7. The applicant has one (1) year from date of signing the OAI contract with the RRWCD Water Activity Enterprise in which to permanently shut down the well, to meet with RRWCD staff to complete the Well Owner's Statement and Request to Cancel a Well Permit and if needed, the Water Well Permit Application (Form GWS-44) if the well owner wishes to apply to down-size the well to a small capacity well for livestock/domestic purposes and to abandon or downsize the well.
8. The first of five (5) annual payments is subject to the RRWCD staff verification that the well has been properly abandoned or was modified to comply with the small capacity well statute. All subsequent payments will be made by July 1<sup>st</sup> during the life of the contract.
9. The RRWCD Water Use Fee is no longer assessed after the first full calendar year of non-irrigation.
10. The land will be assessed by the County Assessor as irrigated land for property tax purposes until the end of the EQIP contract with NRCS.