

RRWCD Welcomes New Board Members

Submitted by Deb Daniel, RRWCD General Manager

At the beginning of the Republican River Water Conservation District (RRWCD) Board meeting last week, the Board welcomed 2 new Board members. Rod Lenz, RRWCD Board President, swore in Brooke Campbell, from Cheyenne Wells, who will be representing the East Cheyenne Ground Water Management District and Jim Hadachek, also from Cheyenne Wells, who will be representing Cheyenne County on the RRWCD Board.

On August 2, 2019, House Bill 19-1029 went into effect. The bill modified the boundary of the Republican River Water Conservation District (RRWCD) to include the southern portion of Kit Carson County and an area in the northern portion of Cheyenne County. All counties and groundwater management districts in the RRWCD are represented on the Board of Directors

The change in the boundary brought approximately 332 wells and the associated irrigated acreage into the RRWCD. The annual diversions from these wells has always been included in the groundwater model which tracks the use of water within each state, from which the depletions to the river are calculated, but because they were not been included in the RRWCD boundary, they have not paid the Water Use Fee as have the well owners that are located in the current RRWCD boundary.

For 2019, the RRWCD Board voted to charge a pro-rated rate of \$6.00 per irrigated acre to the wells in this area instead of the \$14.50 that is assessed on irrigated acres in the RRWCD. All irrigated acres will have the same assessment in 2020.

Effective immediately, the Board approved allowing all acres in the RRWCD be eligible for the EQIP program, which is administered through the NRCS. Anyone interested in more information on the EQIP program should contact your local NRCS office.

Former Senator Greg Brophy gave a presentation on House Bill 19-1327, which is now Proposition DD, to put sports betting on the ballot. The goal of this legislation is to provide a stable funding source to implement the Colorado Water Plan.

The RRWCD approved conservation grant applications from Marks Butte, Frenchman, Sandhills and Central Yuma Groundwater Management Districts (Big 4 GWMDs). The Big 4 GWMDs requested that the grant funds be forwarded to the Colorado Master Irrigator program.

The Board also approved the conservation grant application by W-Y GWMD, requesting funds that will assist in covering costs for implementing conservation efforts in their district.

The RRWCD endorsed an agreement for well owners in the northern portion of the district who have augmentation plans to the Lower South Platte Water Conservancy District or to Sedgwick Water District.

Well owners located in the South Fork Focus Zone who enter into a new CREP contract are now eligible for an additional one-time payment of \$200 per irrigated acre retired. The two million dollars of funding for the supplemental contract is provided by the State of Colorado.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Deb Daniel, RRWCD General Manager (970)332-3552.