

Neb. Water Management Catches Eye Of Other States

BY GRANT SCHULTE
Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — Nebraska's unique system for managing its groundwater is catching the eye of other states that are running dry and threatening farmers with restrictions after decades of overuse.

Despite its widespread use for crop irrigation, Nebraska's groundwater supply has remained stable while states such as California and Texas struggle with shortages. The difference has led some out-of-state water groups and local governments to ask about Nebraska's water-management practices.

"I think interest has certainly increased, and I wouldn't be surprised if it didn't continue to increase," said Jim Schneider, acting director of the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources.

Nebraska regulates its groundwater through 23 natural resources districts, represented by locally elected board members, while the state Department of Natural Resources oversees rivers and lakes. Schneider has been invited to discuss Nebraska's system in November before the American Water Resources Association, a national group that includes private and government water-management experts.

The Nebraska Association of Resources Districts, which represents the 23 districts, has also seen growing interest from states over the last five years, said Dean Edson, the group's executive director.

Edson said he has received inquiries from Florida, Indiana, Oklahoma and Utah, given presentations in Kansas and South Dakota, and is scheduled to speak at a conference of western states in

drought-stricken California in August.

Nebraska regulates its groundwater more heavily than any other state, but the system works well because it relies on local control, said Kris Polly, a special adviser to the Washington-based National Water Resources Association, which organized the California conference. Polly said Nebraska's policies could serve as an example for states that tap their groundwater.

"If there were no controls in place in Nebraska, there would be rapid declines in the Ogallala Aquifer," he said. "There have been some, but due to the regulations, the water level is under control and in some places advancing."

Edson said the natural resources districts, commonly known as NRDs, are effective in part because they have greater authority than most local water boards.

Unlike most states' water regulators, Nebraska's districts have taxing authority to pay for water conservation projects. Their boundaries are drawn by river basin rather than county lines, letting board members focus on the basin as a whole instead of local political interests.

Nebraska's boards also allow anyone who's eligible for public office to serve, while other states restrict their board memberships to farmers who may be reluctant to impose tougher restrictions on themselves.

"Nobody wants to be regulated, but if you want good management of your water resources, you have to have some regulation," Edson said.

The Nebraska boards usually include a mix of farmers, bankers, agribusiness owners, professors and other profession-

als who rely on scientific data from their staff to make decisions, Edson said. Districts prevent farmers from digging too many irrigation wells in one area, and use their taxing power to pay for canals, dams and other projects that replenish groundwater.

Nebraska was the nation's largest irrigator in 2012, according to the most recent U.S. Census of Agriculture, a study conducted by federal government every five years. Nearly 8.3 million acres statewide were irrigated, accounting for 15 percent of the national total. The second-largest irrigator was California, a state with more than twice as much total land.

Some of Nebraska's water bounty is due to luck: The state sits atop the thickest and widest portions of the Ogallala Aquifer, a massive groundwater supply that lies beneath eight states. Nebraska's portion of the aquifer easily recharges because of large areas of sandy soil that allow water to seep back into the ground.

Nebraska delegates an unusual amount of groundwater-management authority to its local natural resources districts compared to other states, said Karina Schoengold, an associate professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Department of Agricultural Economics and School of Natural Resources.

Schoengold said some parts of the state's groundwater supply face long-term concerns, but the NRDs are starting to look at new restrictions to protect it.

With the NRD system, "it's not someone who's across the state who's affected," she said. "It's your neighbor that's affected if you're using too much water. There's a greater vested interest in managing the resource."

Nebraska Pipeline Lawsuit To Be Heard

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A hearing is scheduled Monday in the Nebraska lawsuit challenging a Canadian company's efforts to build an oil pipeline across the Plains to the Gulf Coast.

The landowners are challenging the validity of the state law that authorized TransCanada's proposed route through the state for the Keystone XL pipeline.

The proposed pipeline needs President Barack Obama's approval before it could be built across Montana, South Dakota and Nebraska to connect with existing pipelines. It'd carry more than 33.6 million gallons of oil daily.

TransCanada has said that 90 percent of Nebraska landowners along the Keystone XL route — and 100 percent of those in Montana and South Dakota — have agreed to easements to build the pipeline.

Drowning Victim's Body Is Recovered

ROSEBUD INDIAN RESERVATION (AP) — Authorities have recovered the body of a man who drowned on the Rosebud Indian Reservation.

The Pierre Fire Department's rescue squad found the body of the 35-year-old man on Sunday morning.

The man drowned Saturday afternoon at Spring Creek Dam on the reservation.

Pierre Fire Chief Ian Paul tells KRRC-AM it was too dark to recover the body on Saturday evening.

The man's name will be released after family members are notified.

Authorities: Dad Killed Daughter's Ex

FREMONT, Neb. (AP) — Authorities say an eastern Nebraska man shot and killed his daughter's ex-boyfriend when the 22-year-old tried to talk to the visit the woman.

The Dodge County Sheriff's office says Tyler Childs, of Fremont, was fatally shot late Friday when he visited a mobile home where his ex-girlfriend was living with her parents.

Sheriff Steven Hespen says Childs was confronted by his ex-girlfriend's father, 42-year-old Walter Campo, when he went to the home.

Hespen says Campo had a handgun, and during a confrontation, Childs was fatally shot.

Campo is being held on suspicion of manslaughter and a weapons charge.

Sturgis To Allow Beer Sales In City Park

STURGIS (AP) — The Sturgis City Council has reversed its previous decision and voted to allow a promoter to serve beer in a city park during this year's Sturgis Motorcycle Rally.

The council denied the request from John Oakes, of Sturgis Racing and Entertainment, earlier this month because Oakes couldn't show where he would serve alcohol. Council members were also concerned that hard liquor would be allowed.

The *Rapid City Journal* reports that at a special meeting on Thursday, the council approved a temporary license for the Sturgis City Park. Beer can now be sold during the rally in a shelter at the park and on the soccer fields.

Some residents, including Sturgis Soccer Association president Don Woklenhauer, are concerned hosting rally events in the city park could ruin the grounds.

RC Council Ponders Required Soil Tests

RAPID CITY (AP) — Contractors building homes in Rapid City could soon be required to test soil conditions at building sites after homeowners complained of severe damage caused by expansive soils.

The Rapid City Council is considering the proposed change to the city's residential building code, which would require a home be designed to withstand destructive soil movement if testing finds conditions are poor, the *Rapid City Journal* reported. Homebuilders and their chosen soils specialist would largely be left to do the testing and determine foundation requirements.

"As far as city staff is concerned, we are comfortable with this kind of a come-to-the-middle ordinance proposal. It's better than nothing," said city building official Brad Solon. "This would clear it up for everybody. It would protect consumers for sure. Actually, it's going to protect the contractors, too. We're aware of a number of contractors that are being sued right now."

Clay-rich soils are prevalent in Rapid City, especially on the city's east side, and those soils shrink and expand during dry and wet spells, causing damage to foundations, said Jim Westerman of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, a branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

When a home is improperly built atop expansive soils, it often results in heaved basement slabs, bowed walls and bulged floors. And the cost to fix those problems after the fact can be very expensive.

Man Says Postal Carrier Saved His Life

SCHUYLER, Neb. (AP) — An 85-year-old Nebraska man credits a mail carrier with saving his life on a recent hot day after he fell in the yard.

The *Columbus Telegram* reports Marvin Skarda didn't let the summer heat keep him from doing his yard work.

But after mowing the back yard on July 17, Skarda fell over while trying to pick weeds because of the pain of a recent rib injury. Skarda says he didn't have the

strength to get up and with his neighbors all at work, he didn't think he would survive.

"All that was going through my mind was that I was going to die. I really thought I was going to cash it in," Skarda said. "I just started praying because I knew I had no chance."

Three weeks before this incident, Skarda had been in a car accident after visiting his wife's grave and broken three of his ribs.

Skarda's alert button to

call an ambulance was inside his house charging, so all he could do was call for help over and over again.

Fortunately 24-year-old Aaron Muller heard Skarda's cries from across the street while delivering mail.

Muller, who was filling in on the route that day, found Skarda in his backyard and helped him up. He even returned at the end of his route to make sure he was OK and found Skarda confused from the heat.

So Muller sat with Skarda

and made a few calls to family members and a doctor before moving on.

"He might not think he's a hero, but he's my hero," Skarda said.

Muller didn't bother telling his boss about helping Skarda because he doesn't view it as a big deal.

"If someone needs help you just help them, it's not a question," Muller said. "I didn't do anything exceptional. I was just helping him. Good Samaritan maybe, but not a hero."

OBITUARIES

David Boska

Funeral mass for David Boska, 72, of Tyndall, South Dakota will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, July 28, 2015 at St. Leo Catholic Church in Tyndall with Fr. Joe Forcelle officiating. Burial will be held at a later date.

Visitation will be held at the church on Monday, July 27 from 3:00 p.m. until a 7:00 p.m. wake service there.

David passed away on Thursday, July 23, 2015 near Pickstown while fishing.

Funeral arrangements are being handled by the Goglin Funeral Home of Tyndall. Online condolences may be sent at www.goglinfh.com.

David J. Boska was born on January 10th,



David Boska

1943 to Joseph and Anna (Bystricky) Boska. He was united in marriage to Ruth Ann Stoebner on April 25, 1964 in Tyndall, SD. David and Ruth Ann farmed east of Tyndall for 51 years.

David farmed, custom combined, managed M & J service station, and worked at Lesterville Feed & Grain as a trucker for the past several years. David was

very handy and could fix about anything. He had an infectious laugh and great sense of humor, which made him a favorite among anyone who met him. David enjoyed fishing, camping, gardening, and attending his grandchildren's activities. His favorite vehicles were his red pickup and of course his golf cart, as he and Chester couldn't do any task without it! David was a member of the Knights of Columbus and supported 4-H for many years.

David passed away on Thursday, July 23rd, 2015 at Pickstown, SD having attained the age of 72 years, 6 months and 13 days.

Greatly shared his life with Ruth Ann of Tyndall; daughter Gloriann (Tim) Hovorka of Tyndall; daughter Linda (Steve) Keszler of

Sturgis; son Scott Boska of Tyndall; daughter Amanda (Clint) Willuweit of Gregory; 14 grandchildren, Kyn-dra, Chantelle and Travis Hovorka; Josh, Jocelyn and Jamison Keszler; Slaton, Ty, Paxton and Braven Boska; Atlas, Achilles, Athena and Apollo Willuweit; and two great grandchildren Taylee Ruth and Ryken Richard.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
July 27, 2015

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Roxan

(Emerson) Brown

Roxan (Emerson) Brown, 68, of Vermillion passed away on Saturday, July 25, 2015 at Sanford USD Medical Center in Sioux Falls, SD.

A visitation will be held from 6-7 p.m. today (Monday, July 27) at First Baptist Church in Vermillion with a prayer service at 7 p.m.

A Funeral Service will be held at 11 a.m. Tuesday, July 28, at First Baptist Church in Vermillion with the Rev. Elmer "Sandy" Aakre officiating. Cremation will follow after the service.

The Kober Funeral Home of Vermillion has been entrusted with the services.

Private nonsectarian cemetery offering earth burial plots, mausoleum crypts and niches.

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Honoring Their Memory

Our Thoughts And Prayers Are With Them

Our care and concern does not end with the funeral service. This week we remember with family and friends the anniversary of the deaths of:

Bud Becker
who passed away
July 28, 2013

Dorothy Pasco
who passed away
July 30, 2014

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Feedlots See 18%

Rise in Cattle

SIoux FALLS (AP) — South Dakota feedlots with capacities of 1,000 or more animals reported 230,000 cattle on feed on July 1, up 18 percent from last year.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture says in its latest report that placements in feedlots during June totaled 28,000 head, down 10 percent from 2014.

Marketings of fed cattle during June totaled 26,000 head, down 42 percent from last year.