Dear Editor:

Fifteen years ago who would have thought it was not wise to conserve ground water. Now, farmers who practiced water management may be punished for not pumping their full allocation. The URNRD is proposing any carry forward (saved water which can be used in dry years or on future crops) pumped exceeding 5 inches will be penalized by taking double the amount of what was pumped.

Why would a conservation program do this? By taxing carry forward water, the so called water returns to URNRD. In reality, it creates water on paper, water that is proven not to be there due to water table declines.

My name is Shane Eversole. I may not raise 230 bushel corn but I have conserved a lot of water over the years. That is considered a problem for the URNRD. How is taking my saved water, to offset others who dug into the future allocations by 30 inches or more, seem reasonable?

This along with the URNRD's augmentation project is the foundation of a bad situation. They plan on pumping massive amounts of our precious water into Swanson Reservoir, where maybe 50 percent of the pumped water will actually get there. In addition, Kansas has not accepted pumped water as stream flow. Per the 1943 compact all three states would have to agree and Kansas has not.

What about the future effects on Rock Creek and our irrigation and domestic wells in Dundy County? Wells located southeast, south, and north of the URNRD's augmentation project will be affected.

I personally have visited with the individuals responsible for putting in the underground pipeline and the new wells on the URNRD augmentation project in Dundy County. They have told me that wherever they have put these types of pipelines in the past, the surrounding irrigation wells will pump air and are no longer able to irrigate at all.

At the project site, the URNRD has drilled nine new wells, some of which are in the far corners of the fields to obtain the largest quantity of water. These new wells are supposed to pump 1,400 gallons per minute but they test pumped over 2,000 gallons per minute. It's amazing how much water can be pumped out of the ground using 20 inch well casing.

All of these new wells are on electric meters which are illegal for irrigators to use due to the opportunity for tampering. So, we are to trust the URNRD that they will not over pump their allocation, but they do not trust us.

These meters will be wired so that the URNRD can monitor how much water they are pumping from their offices. As a farmer, I too would like to monitor my daily use of water so that I know exactly how much of my allocation I have used.

Groundwater recharge is a hydrologic process where water moves down to groundwater. This will not be happening on the ground purchased by the URNRD. The water that would have been applied via a sprinkler system will be sent downstream. Pumping will create a void. There will be no recharge on that ground. How far down will the water go after the pumping begins? The only recharge this ground will see is from rainfall.

The future for Dundy County irrigators will be sacrificed for the good of the other two counties in the URNRD. Dundy County will be the only county paying the price in water, land values, property taxes, families and state parks. What about their occupation tax? Every acre they buy is that many less acres to pay the tax that they say they so desperately need. How much more

tax will the rest of us have to pay? There were so many other options not entertained by the URNRD, it would seem that it is all about land and control.

If the URNRD is concerned about conservation, where is the evidence? Rock Creek will be dependent on the URNRD to maintain their water requirements because of effects on their local artesian well. Is taking carry forward water and pumping unlimited water down river affecting natural flow their theory to save water?

If there is a future in irrigation for all counties, we have to be reasonable and responsible. After all, we are all in this district together. It doesn't matter if you are a farmer, rancher, landlord, business or other citizen in the district. URNRD DECISIONS AFFECT US ALL.

If left alone, one can only imagine what the URNRD will do next. The URNRD is not concerned about conservation because their actions, rules and proposed rules changes prove that. My guess is that the NRD has already purchased additional ground in Dundy County for more augmentation projects before the hearing they are having concerning the purchase.

To add a bit of humor, there is a 26 inch water mainline with red fire hydrants scattered about the URNRD property. I hope we don't have any prairie fires that will require the use of those fire hydrants because every one of them has a lock on them. I hope someone knows who has the key!

If you care about the future of Dundy County, it is your obligation to voice your concern to the URNRD board members and managers, and attend the hearings if you can manage to learn of them since they do not seem to publish them noticeably in Dundy County.

Sincerely,
Shane Eversole
Haigler