

## Assistant Manager's Report

July 3, 2025

Despite ample rainfall during June, the drought monitor still includes most of Phelps and Gosper counties in moderate to severe drought. Kearney County isn't much better, however eastern Kearney County is listed as "D0 (Abnormally Dry)" which isn't technically a drought, however after several years of reduced rainfall in that area it's nice to see some better rainfall for that portion of the district.

Last week, John and I were able to meet with the team at Olsson to get our hands on their beta version of the Net Recharge Tool. With any beta version a few bugs are still being worked on but they are working quickly to have a product for us in a timely fashion! I'm looking forward to it's completion!

Also last week, I took Wednesday off to retrieve my daughter from ACE Camp at Kamp Kaleo near Burwell. ACE Camp (Adventure Camp about the Environment) was previously held at Halsey National Forest, but with the loss of the camp during the fires it moved to Kamp Kaleo. NARD hosts the camp, along with other education partners like Game & Parks, Forest Service, UNL Extension, Department of Ag, & NRCS. I particularly enjoyed arriving early to watch water rockets launched and see the awards and video presentations from the kids' time at camp. This was my daughter's second year at ACE Camp and has been a highlight of her summer break.

Water quality sampling began a week earlier than usual. With so many irrigation wells running early this season we decided our best opportunity to collect more samples than last year was to begin early. We were off to a good start, then we had good rains over the weekend that shut off wells, which is great for our crops and groundwater but tricky for water sampling, so we'll wait for our opportunity to get going again – but the forecast shows rain chances every day for the next week. Maybe a good problem to have?

Finally, I'll mention that I've been scouting for locations to drill additional observation wells north and west of Minden. The proposed budget allows for 2-3 wells to be drilled in these areas where we are seeing declines. We would like more data to help us understand what degree of decline we are observing and how widespread. This area is proving to be particularly tricky in finding suitable locations that are not too close to powerlines, not adjacent to the canal system, and won't be in the way for the landowner/producer who agrees to allow us to place the well on their property. I'm confident that I can find several locations yet, hopefully permission won't be too difficult either.

I'll be in and out of the office throughout July. A quick family vacation the week after the 4<sup>th</sup> and then another quick 'vacation' the last week as my wife and I celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a wilderness rafting trip in Idaho. I'll be here for the work session and board meeting, so I look forward to seeing you all then!