

The Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will receive a \$350,000 grant from the Bureau of Reclamation's Basin Study Program to study water management options in the Niobrara River Basin.

DNR Director Brian Dunnigan said, "I am pleased that the Department's basin study proposal for the Niobrara River basin was selected as one of only six projects from across the 17-state region.

"My staff and I look forward to working closely with the basin stakeholders and the Bureau of Reclamation to develop tools and a complete analysis that will assist the stakeholders in effectively managing the water resources of the basin," he said.

The purpose of the study will be to provide the foundational water supply and demand information for evaluation and implementation of water management options for the basin. Evaluation of management options will include impacts to both the water supply and the economy of the region.

The study region will include the Niobrara River from its headwaters in Wyoming to its confluence with the Missouri River in northeast Nebraska.

The project proposal received support from a large group of basin stakeholders, including the Upper Niobrara-White Natural Resources District, the Upper Elkhorn Natural Resources District, the Ainsworth Irrigation District, the Nebraska Public Power District, the National Park Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the state of Wyoming.

The study will begin immediately, with project completion expected in two years.