



May 15, 2023

Dawson Public Power
PO Box 777
Lexington, NE 68850

Dear Devin Brundage:

Please accept this letter in support of the Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District and Dawson Public Power merger.

From the beginning, the Nebraska Water Balance Alliance (NEWBA) has focused our attention on important needs or opportunities for the basis of the organization's success. In 2005, LB962 required the creation of integrated water management plans (IMPs) between ground and surface water users in response to requirements mandated in the three-state Platte River Cooperative Agreement. Roric Paulman, current NEWBA Chair, helped form the West Central Nebraska Water Users Coalition to organize and speak for groundwater users. He also served on the Stakeholder Groups for the Twin Platte NRD and the Platte River Basin - tasked with making recommendations for IMPs in fully and over appropriated basins within 3-5 years. At that time, regulators leaned toward shutting down ground water irrigation to increase streamflow. In response, the Nebraska Water Balance Alliance was formed. This non-profit organization was built on early water balance/water budget work done in the late 1990s by Vince Dreeszen and the Nebraska Well Driller's Association, by using test wells and analyzing well data to understand and protect critical groundwater resources. An economic study by the Platte Institute also evaluated the negative economic impacts of reduced irrigation. This led to concern not only by well drillers and producers but also to rural power districts. Dawson Public Power District and Midwest Public Power District became strong supporters of NEWBA in the early years, funding NEWBA operations and an economic study by Dr. Eric Thomson (UNL) on the impact of converting irrigated acres to dryland. As NEWBA further explored and communicated water balance concepts and potential impacts of reducing irrigated farmland, more rural power districts added their support. To better understand consumptive water use, NEWBA initiated a demonstration project, created, and led by Ted Tietjen (Perkins County grower and current NEWBA Board Member), to measure evapotranspiration (ET) and investigate ways to improve ag water management.

Today, NEWBA continues engagement in researching, identifying, and educating on new and emerging technologies that can help sustainable water management succeed in today's uncertain agricultural environment, ensuring a sustainable water supply for future generations of Nebraskans. NEWBA's

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focus on increasing awareness and adoption of improved water management tactics and technologies was demonstrated in NEWBA-hosted water summits, grower meetings and field days. Roric Paulman's farm serves as a working model for the implementation of new water management strategies. These events brought together a large, diverse group of producers, vendors, lenders, regulators, university, media, and influencers. As a result, opportunities for team-based efforts opened as others involved in innovative water solutions partnered with NEWBA in a variety of ways.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Harsch". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Amy Harsch

General Manager, Nebraska Water Balance Alliance