

in western Nebraska. Nebraska has a complicated water system. Much of our water originates out of state. It is used and returned over and over again. Water for the North Platte River starts in Colorado and is stored in the State of Wyoming in the Kendrick and North Platte water projects. These projects are a series of seven dams and five power plants, and, right before it reaches Nebraska, it is diverted by what is called the Wayland Diversion Dam Project. Since 1909, water for the North Platte Project has been diverted from the river by this diversion dam. The water is diverted on the south side of the river into Fort Laramie Canal and on the north side of the River into the Interstate, so that Platte River is split into two parts. This canal, the Laramie Canal, has an initial capacity of 1,500 cubic feet per second, and it winds its way for 130 miles to an area south of Gering, Nebraska, delivering to farms all along its course. The other Interstate that goes to the north has a capacity of 2,200 cubic feet per second. It was constructed during 1905 to 1915 and it follows the contour of the land for 95 miles to Lake Alice and Lake Minatare Reservoirs, which are northeast of Scottsbluff, Nebraska. The 37-mile high-line canal extends from Lake Alice to the southwest, and the diversion capacity is 160 cubic feet per second. This construction was in 1910 to 1913. The low-line canal extends from Lake Minatare southwest and it is 144 miles long and has a diversion capacity of 343 cubic feet per second. Lake Alice, Lake Minatare, Lake Winters Creek and Reservoir #2 are offstream equalizing reservoirs. The reservoirs are fed from water diverted at Wayland, again, Diversion Dam through the Interstate Canal, which ends at Lake Alice. The reservoir supply canal carries water to other reservoirs which are usually filled each year before the start of the irrigation system. Natural depressions are made into important reservoirs by building the upper and lower dams at Lake Alice and Minatare Dams and the combined storage capacity is about 75,000 acre feet. Then we have the Northport Canal which is laid 80 miles through the Tri-State Canal of the Farmers Irrigation District. This Northport Canal is a continuation of the privately constructed Tri-State Canal and was designed to irrigate 16,170 acres in the Northport Division. The canal is 28 miles long and has a diversion capacity of 250 cubic feet per second. The benefit of the system of irrigation in our area is 335,000 acres of what used to be sagebrush and rangeland, and they were transformed into productive farmland. If you take a look at Scotts Bluff County and its neighbors, you will see that Scotts Bluff has a 1990 population count of 36,000. Sioux County, to the north of us,