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LB 962

SENATOR BEUTLER: Well, let me ask you this. If we fund this bill, under the way the bill is currently structured, could some of that money be used to purchase water rights?

SENATOR SCHROCK: Yes, it could be.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Okay.

SENATOR SCHROCK: I don't anticipate for much of that to take place, however. I don't think that's the purpose for the funding.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Well, if...there are a couple of ways of approaching, I suppose, an over-appropriated area. One is to try to purchase the rights. The other is to cut down on the uses until it's not over-appropriated, and...or some combination of those things. Is it anticipated in this bill that all of those tools will be given to the department and/or the natural resource districts?

SENATOR SCHROCK: Yes, Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Okay. One of the phenomena that we've noticed in the Republican area and also in the Platte is that people are rushing out to establish new wells. In fact, I think the number of new wells recently has spurted up considerably, if I'm remembering correctly.

SENATOR SCHROCK: But in some areas it's come to a screeching halt, too.

SENATOR BEUTLER: That also? These people that are rushing out there to establish these wells, some of them may not even use the wells for very long. Are we going to be paying them to take away water rights they didn't have until they rushed out and got them?

SENATOR SCHROCK: I can't imagine that would take place, Senator Beutler. And in the Republican River Basin, if your well is drilled after January 1, 2001, that well can be regulated