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FLOOR DEBATE

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you not allow those wells to pump, or do you put more restrictions on the amount of water that can be pumped out of those wells? Senator Schrock has mentioned that the wells have anywhere from 11 to 12 inches of water. Out in the western end of the state, in the Pumpkin Creek area, they were restricted down to somewhere around 11 to 14 inches, in that area. And they've usually, actually, averaged out about 7 inches. So farmers are doing projects to cut down on their pumping, and are doing something to help the flow of water. The Pumpkin Creek now is starting to flow in a few places, so it can help. The question I have is, you know, how many of these wells...when you look at the wells, there's, what, 500-and-some wells on the two Middle Republican and Lower Republican that were drilled back in those days, or something like that. Will that make a difference? So when you shut down the wells, you got to decide first whether or not it makes a difference. It hasn't been till just the last few years that they've...people have realized that there is...that pumping does affect the creeks and the flows of rivers. And I've always had some concern about the way our water situation was. If you had water rights on running water, why, you were allowed so many acre-feet, and that was the size of it. But you could drill a well right alongside a flowing creek or river, and you could pump all you want. This also happens on some of the canals in the western part of Nebraska. People will drill irrigation wells a certain distance from an irrigation canal, and be able to pump through the summertime because of the groundwater that seeps away. So I think Senator Beutler's amendment is very good for discussion. I think there's something that needs to be said for it. Whether this is the approach that needs to be done, I would like to see more work done on this. I think we can eventually come up with a good solution here someplace along the line. And I'll return the rest of my time to Senator Beutler, if he would so desire, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER BRASHEAR: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker, how much time remains?

SPEAKER BRASHEAR: One minute and forty seconds.