

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

March 16, 2006 LB 32

putting a moratorium on well drilling until some of their research comes forward so they find out how much water is actually there. On some of these districts the research is out there, and until they find out what the recharge rate is, they won't know how much they can pump out. Anytime you're pumping out more than what the recharge rate is, consequently, you're mining water and something will have to be done. The question is now on some of these NRD districts where they've drilled too many wells, how are you going to change that? How are you going to make that work so that there can be water into the future? You can't continue to mine the water or else it will all be gone. So consequently, when they find out perhaps there's so many inches of water per well, you're going to have to divide that amount of recharge by the number of wells and that's the amount of wells that are going to be allowed to operate in an NRD district, whether you have that certain number of wells each year, whether you shut some of them down entirely, whether people that have irrigation wells, will the NRDs have to decree in the future that everybody has to shut down 10 percent of their wells or 20 percent of their wells. So there's some problems in the future to work on. And I think we're probably working towards that end. Right now most of our NRDs aren't fully to the full taxation. There is some room for...some wiggle room for another year or so. But I think this is something the NRDs are going to have to bring forward themselves on how they want to solve their problem. They helped get into the problem so I think they'll have to help get out of it. I don't think the state of Nebraska can categorically just break open the checkbook from time to time and bail everybody out and start over again. I agree with Senator Beutler, this has went on from time to time and something...it can't continue at that rate. So the question is, is what do we do to straighten it out? If the NRDs aren't satisfied with what we might do, then I would suggest that they come forward with their own plans on how they're going to bring themselves into line with the amount of recharge rate they have with the amount of pumping. Now some of this is going to help considerably for the surface water users in areas. Right now they're talking about the snowpack being over 100 percent in the Wyoming area for some of the surface water irrigators along the Platte River in western Nebraska. And that is what will...the tail waters from those irrigation