



## FUNDING SOURCE WATER PROTECTION CASE STUDY

### Nebraska Pioneers *Drinking Water Management Plans* to Access Clean Water Act Funds for Source Water Protection

**Summary:** Nebraska's Source Water Protection Grant Program annually awards grants to small communities for projects that provide long-term benefits to drinking water quality, quantity, and/or education by utilizing funds from the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (DWSRF) 15% set-asides. These projects can include activities such as decommissioning abandoned wells, developing Wellhead/Source Water Protection Plans, conducting source water vulnerability assessments, and steering public education activities. Currently, funds total only \$100,000 per year and, therefore, have been limited to small-scale, big impact projects.

#### Programs Involved

- [Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality \(DEQ\) Source Water Protection Program](#)
- [Clean Water Act Section 319 Nonpoint Source Program](#)

In order to support more comprehensive projects, the State's (SDWA) Source Water Protection program and the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 319 Nonpoint Source program are working together to develop and implement Drinking Water Management Plans (DWMPs). Communities will soon be able to apply Source Water Protection grant funds to develop DWMPs that meet the requirements of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's CWA 319 alternative to a 9-element Watershed Management Plan, which are required for access to CWA 319 grants. With an approved DWMP, communities have the opportunity to apply 319 grant funds to source water protection projects such as on-the-ground Best Management Practices and public outreach. Funding for planning has been limited in the past and this collaboration between funding sources is sure to open up new avenues to higher levels of protection.



**Results:** Nebraska will likely start out by funding one DWMP per year with the DWSRF 15% set-aside funds. Drinking Water Management Plans must include: five of the nine elements of a watershed management plan; groundwater modeling for a 50 year time-of-travel in the wellhead protection area; a community based planning process for the development of the plan; and implementation of an information and education program. This program is in the beginning phase and the details have not yet been finalized. However, EPA has agreed to coordinate closely with Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality to include these activities in the state's Intended Use Plan.

### **Funding Sources Accessed**

- [Drinking Water State Revolving Fund 15% set-asides](#)
- [Clean Water Act Section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Program Grants](#)

### **Additional Resources**

- [Draft Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Eligibility Handbook, 2016](#)
- [Clarification of Certain Eligible Uses of DWSRF Set-Asides](#)
- [CWA 319 Nonpoint Source Program and Grants Guidelines for States and Territories](#)
- [Nebraska Source Water Protection Grant Program](#)

### **For More Information, Contact:**

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