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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **All-Hazard Mitigation Planning Meetings Scheduled**

### *Public invited to participate*

If your town was wiped out by a tornado, would you know where to start rebuilding? With landmarks gone, can you find what you need? If you're not in a structure with a basement, where do you go to protect yourself during the storm?

Or a winter storm knocks out power and the lines can't be fixed for days—or weeks. How do you react? Who's there to help?

These situations and other natural disasters, such as floods, wind storms, droughts, wildfires, and dam failures, are all part of a plan currently being developed for each community in your county.

The Little Blue Natural Resource District (NRD) and the Lower Big Blue NRD are partnering with the counties of Jefferson, Gage, Saline, Thayer, Nuckolls, Fillmore, Clay, Adams and Webster and their Emergency Management coordinators to develop a regional All-Hazards Mitigation Plan. An All-Hazards Mitigation Plan is now required as part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 regulation for any local governmental entity to receive federal funding for FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance Programs, including Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), post-disaster funds; Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) pre-disaster funding; Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA); Repetitive Flood Claim (RFC), and the Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) Programs.

The first step in developing the All-Hazards Mitigation Plan is to hold public meetings in each county to receive public comments about disaster types, problem areas, and potential mitigation solutions. This is your chance to provide input on your community and what steps you'd like taken to protect it.

All public officials and members of the public are encouraged to attend a meeting to learn more about the planning process, what information is needed to develop the plan and how they can participate.

"The public's participation is critical for a successful plan," said Mike Onnen, manager of the Little Blue NRD. "Much of the information we hope to gather are the details that local residents can provide."

Meetings have been set for the following counties and locations:

May 14	8 p.m.	Clay Co.	Clay County Fairgrounds, Clay Center
May 15	7 p.m.	Adams Co.	Quality Inn Convention Center, Hastings
May 20	2 p.m.	Webster Co.	Webster County Courthouse, Red Cloud

May 20	7 p.m.	Thayer Co.	Thayer County Fairgrounds, Deshler
May 21	7 p.m.	Saline Co.	Saline Center Hall, Rural Wilber
May 22	7 p.m.	Fillmore Co.	Geneva Public Library, Geneva
May 27	7 p.m.	Gage Co.	Gage County Extension Office, Beatrice
May 28	7 p.m.	Jefferson Co.	Community Center in Fairbury Park

Following the public meetings, the public feedback will be reviewed, compiled, and added to the plan. The NRDs have hired Olsson Associates to develop the plan over the next 18 months. A second public meeting to share the plan details will be scheduled later in the project.

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