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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, where would you go to protect yourself? With landmarks gone, could you find what you need? Would you know where and how to start the rebuilding process?

Or if a winter storm knocked out power and the lines and couldn't be fixed for days—or weeks, how would you respond? Where would you turn for 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 project to develop the All-Hazards Mitigation Plan began in May 2008 when public meetings were held in each county to receive public comments about disaster types, problem areas, and potential mitigation solutions.

Now, a second round of public meetings has been scheduled for this spring to allow all public officials and members of the public an opportunity to hear about the plan's progress and share feedback on projects that could help their communities.

"The public's participation is critical for a successful plan," said Mike Onnen, manager of the Little Blue NRD. "We've gathered quite a bit of information over the past year, and now we need the public's help to evaluate and rank the projects that have been added to the draft mitigation plan."

Meetings have been set for the following counties and locations:

March 23	7:30 p.m.	Clay Co.	Clay County Fairgrounds, Clay Center
April 20	7:30 p.m.	Fillmore Co.	Geneva Public Library, Geneva
April 21	7:30 p.m.	Thayer Co.	Courthouse Club Room, Hebron

April 22	7:30 p.m.	Saline Co.	Saline Center Hall, Highway 15 & County Road M
April 23	7:30 p.m.	Jefferson Co.	Jefferson County Fairgrounds, Fairbury
April 27	7:30 p.m.	Gage Co.	Wymore Community Building, Wymore
April 29	3 p.m.	Webster Co.	Court House, Red Cloud
April 29	7 p.m.	Nuckolls Co.	City Auditorium, Nelson
April 20	7:30 p.m.	Adams Co.	Hastings Police Station Auditorium, Hastings

Following the public meetings, the public feedback will be reviewed, compiled, and adjustments made to the plan as needed. The Olsson Associates consulting firm was hired to assist the NRDs in the planning process. The resulting plan will be completed and submitted to Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) this summer.

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Hazard planning meeting Monday in Clay Center

HASTINGS TRIBUNE

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CLAY CENTER — The Little Blue Natural Resources District will help to sponsor a public meeting Monday here concerning a regional All-Hazards Mitigation Plan now under development.

The meeting begins 7:30 p.m. on the Clay County Fairgrounds in Clay Center.

The LBNRD is partnering with the Lower Big Blue NRD and nine counties to develop the regional plan. Monday's meeting will allow public officials and citizens to learn about the plan's progress and share feedback on projects that could help their communities.

"The public's participation is critical for a successful plan," said Mike Onnen, manager of the Little Blue NRD. "We've gathered a lot of information

over the last year, and now we need the public's help to evaluate and rank the projects that have been added to the draft mitigation plan."

Following the meeting, public feedback will be reviewed and compiled, and adjustments to the plan will be made as needed.

The resulting plan will be submitted to the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency this summer.

Olsson Associates, a Nebraska consulting firm, as been hired to assist the NRDs and counties in the planning project.

All local governments now must be signed onto of an All-Hazards Mitigation Plan to receive federal funding for Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.