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Study Shows Drop in Nebraska Groundwater Levels

(KTNC) -- Nebraska farmers used a lot of irrigation to keep crops alive during the 2012 drought.

That and a lack of recharge from rain have drastically dropped the state's water supply.

A study of groundwater levels in Nebraska discloses a drop unprecedented since the study has been taken.

The 2013 Nebraska Statewide Groundwater Level Monitoring Report reveals that between the spring of 2012 and spring of 2013, all but three counties in the state experienced a water level drop of at least a foot. Some parts of Nebraska saw a drop of nearly 25-feet.

State Senator Tom Carlson of Holdrege, who sponsored legislation that created the Water Sustainability Task Force says the study bolsters the task force's argument that calls on the state to take steps to maintain its water resources.

The task force recommends the state spend 50-million dollars annually – up to a total of one billion dollars – on projects to sustain groundwater supplies. Carlson acknowledges it will be a challenge to convince lawmakers that the state needs to devote the money needed to maintain adequate water supplies.

Nebraska Radio Network