

# Severe weather ends drought for Nebraska, director says

By Kara Wells  
Staff Reporter

The recent onset of severe weather marks the end of the drought Nebraska has been experiencing, according to Donald Wilhite, director of the International Drought Information Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

"We've largely pulled out of what we've been in for the last several years," Wilhite said.

For the second consecutive winter, warm temperatures and below normal precipitation caused weather conditions coming into spring to be considerably worse than the year before, he said.

As a result of the dry winter, he said, the ground water and soil reserves were drawn down.

Wilhite said weather conditions began to improve in March. There was above normal precipitation in March and May, with a slight decrease in April. This pattern of increased precipitation continued with severe weather to improve the soil's condition, he said.

Wilhite said the current soil moisture supply is good, but there is still concern for northeastern Nebraska and the Sandhills.

He said there has been a lag in soil moisture improvement because effects of the drought tend to linger. But, he said, the groundwater levels

are returning to normal.

"The amount of above normal rainfall we've been getting will replenish the soil and recharge ground water levels," Wilhite said.

Although Nebraska is recovering from the drought, he said, western states are in bad shape because they continue to suffer from dry weather.

Western states depend on large storage systems for their water supply, Wilhite said. He said those reservoirs are nearly empty, which con-

tributes to the severe drought conditions there.

In Nebraska, he said, farmers rely on groundwater and irrigation for moisture.

Wilhite said that for now, the 30-day outlook shows a continuation of the normal rainfall. But, he said, it could change dramatically in the latter summer months.

"Basically, we should be in good shape from the agricultural perspective," he said.

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## Apartheid

Continued from Page 1

crowds of South African school children who were protesting the teaching of Afrikaans in school. Afrikaans is the language of white South Africans. More than 600 South Africans died during the violence of the next 11 months.

Brian Chaffin, a graduate student in English, said the Coalition Against Apartheid wants the non-profit company to divest.

But NU Foundation president Terry Fairfield said the foundation has "very minor" amounts invested in companies that do business in South Africa, and the foundation "focuses on investments as investments without consideration of social policies."

Because the foundation is a private, not a state, organization, it isn't required by law to withdraw its investments from South Africa.

Nell Eckersly, Early Warning! facilitator, said the demonstrators also wanted to promote the upcoming apartheid rally scheduled for July 16.

Though blacks' freedom has progressed in South Africa, she said, people need to continue the fight.

"It's important that right now the U.S. makes a stand," she said.

After reaching the State Capitol, Joseph Akpan, president of the Nigerian Student Organization, spoke briefly to the demonstrators about support for the anti-apartheid movement.

"Keep the issue alive. Be involved. Voice your own support. If we mount a campaign . . . they will have to listen," he said.

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