LINCOLN—Groundwater levels declined last year in five wells assessed by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Conservation and Survey Division.

The findings, in a new CSD report, offer a snapshot of water level changes during the 2012 drought at selected locations in Nebraska.

While the annual reports assess data from about 5,500 wells, only five wells were selected for this special report. The CSD chose these wells because they're in regions with a high density of irrigation wells and because of their historically significant water-level changes. The special report's findings are consistent with historical trends, but it is not intended to be a comprehensive study of the impacts of the 2012 drought, said Aaron Young, the groundwater resource coordinator for the CSD.

All five of the selected sites discussed in the special report experienced a water-level decline from the spring of 2012 to the spring of 2013, ranging from 1.85 to 5.5 feet. Specifically, the Grainton Recorder well in Perkins County fell 1.85 feet; the Alliance Recorder well in Box Butte County fell 3.33 feet; the Elgin Recorder well in Antelope County fell 5.50 feet; the Shickley Recorder well in Fillmore County fell 2.87 feet, and the Aurora Recorder well in Hamilton County fell 5.00 feet.

The CSD publishes the annual Nebraska Statewide Groundwater-Level Monitoring Reports each fall after the spring water level measurements have been taken and analyzed. This special spring report is in response to last year's drought and meant to help individuals and organizations prepare for the coming agricultural season.

"Many people are concerned about how much groundwater levels declined due to the 2012 drought," said Young. "This report will give a rough idea of how water levels responded in areas with a high density of irrigation wells."

The annual groundwater-level reports measure the change in Nebraska's water levels and reflect historical trends.

Electronic copies of the spring special report are available free at http://snr.unl.edu/data/down

load/water/GWMapArchives/GWReports/ESN-9_2012.pdf.

The annual Nebraska Statewide Groundwater-Level Monitoring Reports are available online at go.unl.edu/groundwater. Paper copies of both reports are also available for purchase through the Nebraska Maps and More Store at 101 Hardin Hall, 3310 Holdrege Street, Lincoln, NE 68583-0961. Those interested in print copies of the annual reports or the special report may contact Nebraska Maps and More at 402-472-3471 or snrsales@unl.edu.