

UPPER ELKHORN The Oracle

“Making Wise Decisions Concerning Our Natural Resources”

<http://www.uenrd.org>

Time is Running Out To Certify Groundwater Irrigated Acres - Deadline January 31, 2021

Final notices were sent out in September to Landowners who still have un-certified irrigated acre parcels!

The Upper Elkhorn NRD continues its Groundwater Irrigated Acre Certification. One of the goals of certifying irrigated acres, is to have all acres certified within 2 years after the effective date of the V-IMP. This plan became effective February 1, 2019 so the deadline is to have all eligible acres certified by January 31, 2021.

If Groundwater Irrigated Acres are not certified with the Upper Elkhorn NRD, there is a chance that they will not be allowed to be irrigated in

the future. It is the best interest of the landowner to certify those groundwater irrigated acres to protect their investment.

Documentation for Acre Certification: Proper documentation for the certification of irrigated acres will include either county assessor records noting the year and irrigated acres or an FSA 578 form. Any irrigated acres that are not certified during the specified dates would not be allowed to have groundwater applied to them for any purpose. Final acre certification will be based off of County Assessor and/or FSA records. Lower Niobrara River Basin: Landowners who own groundwater irrigated acres within the

Lower Niobrara River Basin and can show proof that they irrigated them at least once between the years 2003 and October 16, 2007 will be able to certify their acres at 100%. Acres irrigated prior to 2003 will be considered Historically irrigated and with the proper documentation will be certified at 95%.

Lower Platte River Basin: Landowners who own groundwater irrigated acres within the Lower Platte River Basin and can show proof that they irrigated them at least once between the years 2004 and December 16, 2008 will be able to certify their acres at 100%. Acres irrigated prior to 2004 will be considered

Historically irrigated and with the proper documentation will be certified at 95%.

Area Outside the 10/50 Line (Northern Antelope County): Landowners who own groundwater irrigated acres within the area outside the 10/50 line and can show proof that they irrigated them at least once between the years 2008 and October 1, 2012 will be able to certify their acres at 100%. Acres irrigated prior to 2008 will be considered Historically irrigated and with the proper documentation will be certified at 95%.

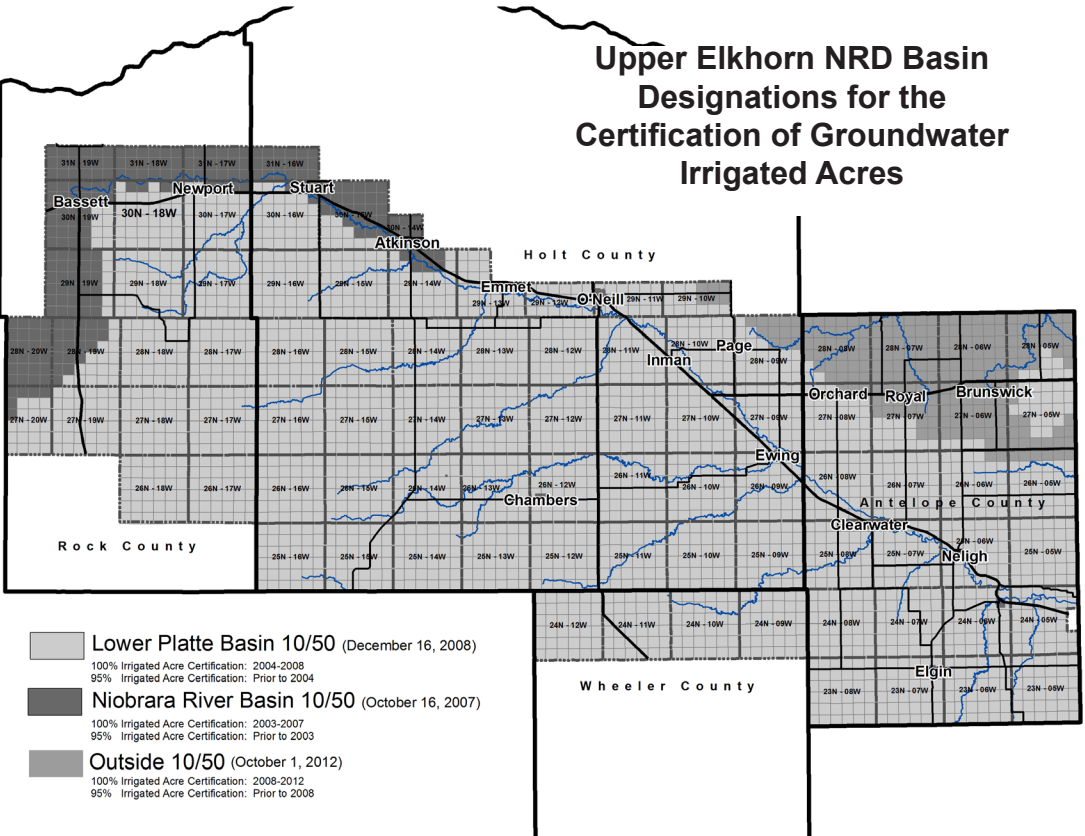
Historically irrigated acres: Historically irrigated acres shall consist of groundwater irrigated acres which were irrigated prior to 2003 for the Lower Niobrara River Basin, 2004 for the Lower Platte River Basin and 2008 for the area outside the 10/50 line or are currently enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, Environmental Quality Incentive Program or other federal, state or local conservation program must also be certified if there is any possibility of future irrigation.

Natural
Resources
District

Fall/Winter 2020

UENRD Senior Scholarship Program

Each year, the Upper Elkhorn Natural Resources District offers three \$500 scholarships to graduating High School Seniors from the District. These scholarships are available for students who are planning to further their education in a field related to natural resources or agriculture. Seniors who are interested should contact the Upper Elkhorn NRD or visit the website at www.uenrd.org/education.html for further information, eligibility requirements and applications. The deadline for all scholarship applications is April 2, 2021.



Reminder! Expansion & Transfer Acres Must Be Re-Certified

Cooperators who have Expanded or Transferred groundwater irrigated acres must re-certify those locations once they are watered. Documentation should be in the form of a FSA form 578 or county assessor tax records and will be based off of the first irrigation season following the approval of the expansion or transfer. Please contact the office if you have any questions.

Upper Elkhorn
Natural Resources District

Tree Orders Being Taken Now For Spring Planting! Deadline March 1

How about a new windbreak to help keep down the wind and offer protection for cattle and homesteads? The UENRD is now taking orders for machine and handplant seedlings for spring delivery and planting.

There are several incentive programs to help offset the cost of installing a new windbreak on the federal, state and local level. Contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service or your local NRD to find out what programs are available.

The Upper Elkhorn NRD will be taking orders from now until March 1st. Trees are available on a first come first serve basis and are available in a variety of species consisting of conifers, broadleaves and shrubs. Hand plant trees should be ordered in bundles of 25 while machine plant orders will be based on the windbreak design. The NRD can also provide technical assistance to cooperators who would like help designing a new windbreak or renovating an old one. The technician will suggest the type of trees best suited for your soil type and design a layout beneficial to your needs.

The NRD also offers two practices to help increase the survival rate of new seedlings, drip irrigation and conservation weed mulch. Drip irrigation is available for cooperator installation and is used when there is a water source at the site. Conservation weed mulch is installed over the seedlings to help control weeds and retain moisture. Both practices can be very beneficial to young windbreaks and should be considered when placing your order.

Remember, the Upper Elkhorn NRD is also your one-stop shop to order trees and weed mulch. The NRD can plant and install the trees and fabric as we have for the past 40+ years. Trees and mulch purchased from the Upper Elkhorn NRD could be eligible for local or state funds. For further information or to place an order contact your local NRCS office or the Upper Elkhorn NRD at 301 N. Harrison Street, O'Neill or (402) 336-3867.

Available Tree Species

| Conifers | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Eastern Red Cedar | Rocky Mountain Juniper | Colorado Blue Spruce |
| Black Hills Spruce | Norway Spruce | Jack Pine |
| Ponderosa Pine | | |
| Broadleaves | | |
| Native Cottonwood | Swamp White Oak | Bur Oak |
| Black Walnut | American Elm | Silver Maple |
| Hackberry | Honeylocust | Black Cherry |
| Catalpa | Crabapple | Amur Maple |
| Red Oak | Red Maple | Hybrid Poplar |
| Shrubs | | |
| Caragana | Sumac | Chokecherry |
| Chokeberry | Sandcherry | Elderberry |
| Dogwood | Hazelnut | Cotoneaster |
| Lilac | American Plum | Buffaloberry |
| Serviceberry | Golden Current | |

Cost of Trees & Materials

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Handplant Trees | \$ 1.10/Tree plus tax |
| Machine Plant Trees | \$ 180.00/100 plus tax |
| Weed Mulch (Installed) | \$.75/foot plus tax |
| Weed Mulch 500 Foot Roll | \$ 200.00/Roll |
| Weed Mulch Squares | \$ 2.75 Each plus tax |
| Prices Subject to Change | |

Nitrogen Certification Dates will be announced in January 2020. Landowner/Operators needing to re-certify in Nitrogen Management will be notified by mail.

Upper Elkhorn NRD Board of Directors Set Property Tax Asking for FY 20-21

The Upper Elkhorn NRD Board of Directors in September approved the 2020-2021 fiscal year budget, mill-levy and property tax asking. The FY 20-21 budget request is only 1.80 cents per \$100 of valuation for a total of \$836,785 in property tax asking. This reflects no increase from last years property tax asking. The Upper Elkhorn NRD continues to maintain a responsible budget to lessen the property tax burdens of its friends and neighbors. This has been accomplished by obtaining additional funding through the Nebraska Environmental Trust and the Department of Environmental Quality 319 Grants.

2021 Chemigation Season

The Upper Elkhorn NRD will once again be mailing out Renewal Chemigation Forms for the 2021 Growing Season. Cooperators who Chemigated last year will receive their preprinted renewal forms in January. Forms will need to be completed with last years fertilizer/pesticide use, signed and returned by the June 1 deadline!

UENRD Crop Water Use Report 2020 for Phase II Reporting

| Elgin | Total Inches | Emergence | Maturation |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Corn Total ET | 20.15 | 5/10/2020 | 9/23/2020 |
| Soybean Total ET | 20.52 | 5/17/2020 | 9/23/2020 |
| Potato Total ET | 20.76 | 5/15/2020 | 9/30/2020 |
| Precipitation from 5/1/2020 | 14.19 | | |
| | | | |
| O'Neill | Total Inches | Emergence | Maturation |
| Corn Total ET | 23.50 | 5/10/2020 | 9/28/2020 |
| Soybean Total ET | 23.89 | 5/17/2020 | 9/26/2020 |
| Potato Total ET | 24.00 | 5/15/2020 | 10/1/2020 |
| Precipitation from 5/1/2020 | 11.66 | | |

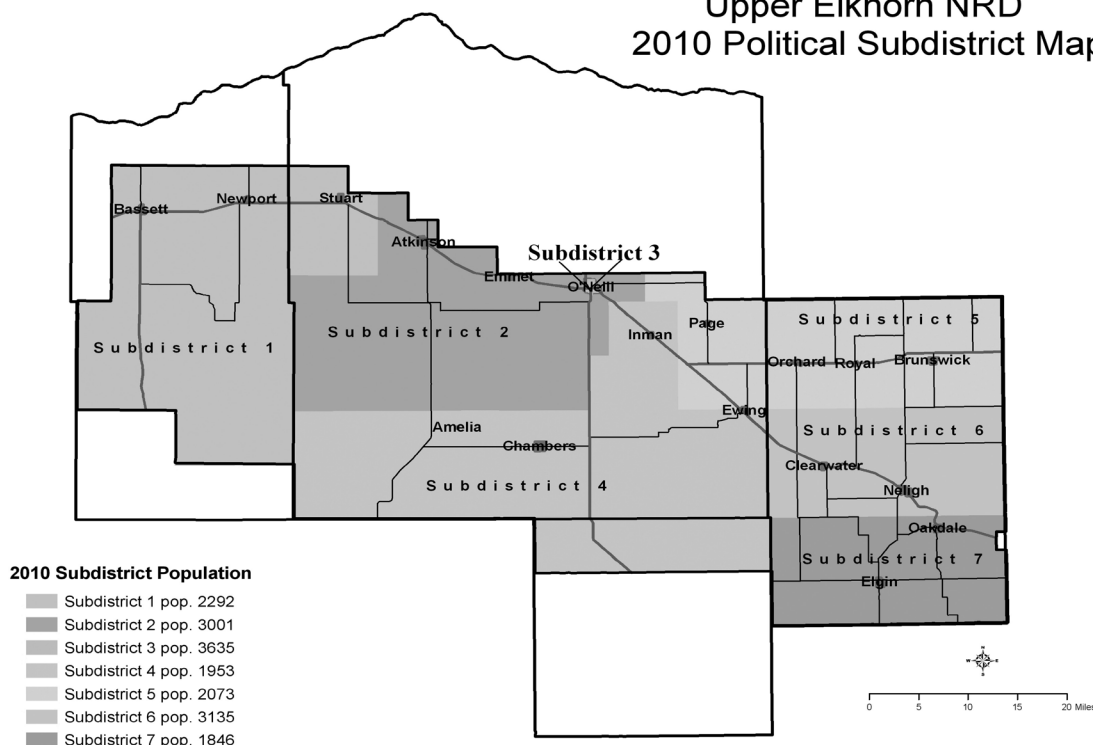
The Oracle is the official publication of the Upper Elkhorn Natural Resources District. It is produced for the purpose of educating the public regarding natural resources issues. Any comments or questions should be sent to Beth Walsh, Upper Elkhorn NRD, 301 N. Harrison Street, O'Neill, NE 68763 or e-mailed to bwalsh@uenrd.org.

Upper Elkhorn NRD Board of Directors Election Results

| | Candidate | Antelope County | Holt County | Rock County | Wheeler County | Total |
|----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|-------|
| Sub-district 1 | Roy Stewart | | 382 | 536 | | 918 |
| Subdistrict 2 | Curtis Gotschall | | 1583 | | | 1583 |
| Sub-district 3 | Gene Kelly | | 1482 | | | 1482 |
| Sub-district 4 | Gary Bartak | | 456 | | 70 | 526 |
| Sub-district 5 | Cody Frank | 389 | 80 | | | 469 |
| | Dennis Bridge | 318 | 79 | | | 397 |
| Sub-district 6 | Art Tanderup | 959 | | | | 959 |
| Sub-district 7 | Keith Heithoff | 808 | | | | 808 |

The Upper Elkhorn NRD will be welcoming Newly Elected Directors Cody Frank of Brunswick; and, Art Tanderup of Neligh in January 2021 when they will be sworn in to office and begin their representation on the NRD Board.

Upper Elkhorn NRD
2010 Political Subdistrict Map



UENRD Phase III Soil Sampling UTV Made Possible Through a NET Grant



Funding from a Nebraska Environmental Trust (NET) Grant assisted in the purchase of a UTV and soil sampling probe for deep soil sampling. The UENRD is soil sampling in the Phase III areas of the district to see how much residual nitrogen is being left in the soil.



Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts
Protecting Lives
Protecting Property &
Protecting the Future Since 1972

Notice:
Anyone Applying for an Application for a Permit to Construct a New or Replacement Irrigation Well within the Upper Elkhorn NRD MUST have their groundwater irrigated acres certified prior to receiving approval!

Bazile Groundwater Management Area Update: Community Involvement

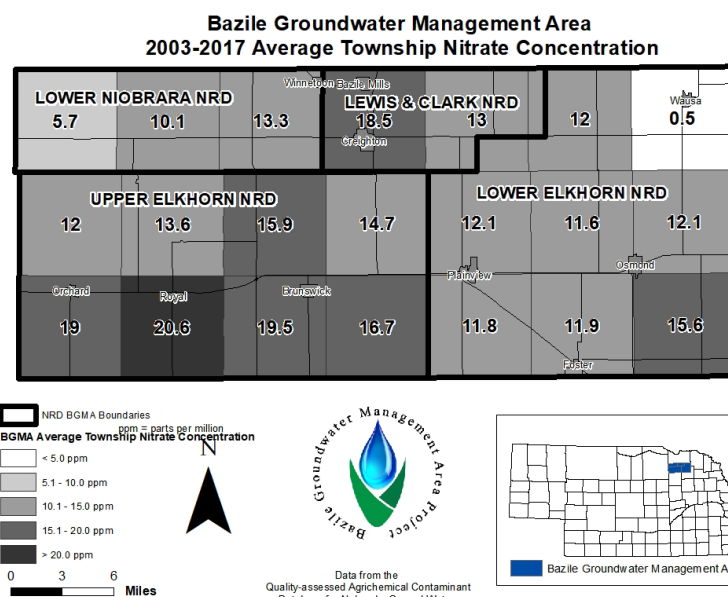
In early December, the Bazile Groundwater Management Area (BGMA) held community meetings in Creighton and Osmond. One was also held in Orchard in March 2020. These meetings were an opportunity to voice opinions and concerns regarding groundwater contamination throughout the area.

The goal of the meetings was to develop a group of citizens who are interested and committed to lead the charge in working towards a solution.

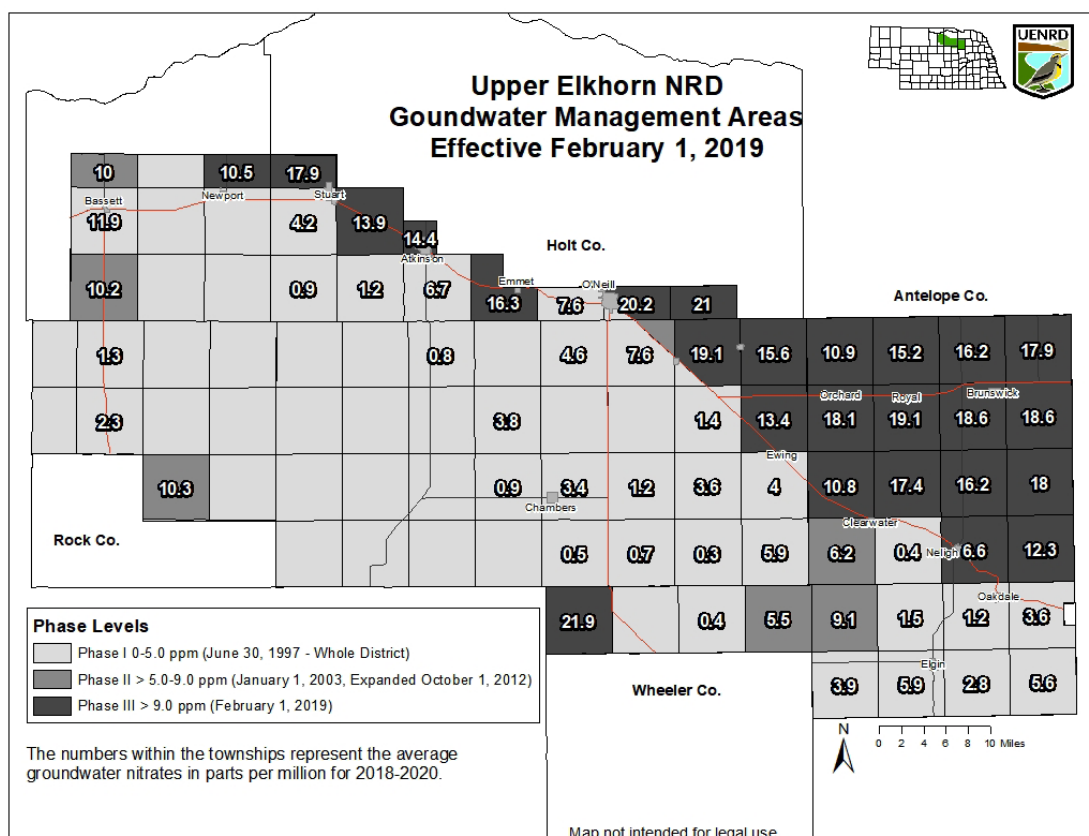
Community members who were present talked about what they already knew, what they would like to know, where they thought the project should go next, and were asked if they were willing to be part of a citizen action group.

Everyone who lives, works, or farm within the Bazile Groundwater Management Area that includes the communities of Brunswick, Bazile Mills, Creighton, Foster, Orchard, Osmond, Plainview, Royal, Wausa, and Winnetoon are invited to be part of the group.

If you were unable to attend one of the meetings, but would like to be part of the group or would like more information please visit: <https://go.unl.edu/bazile-community-action> or contact Connor Baldwin, Bazile Groundwater Management Coordinator, at the Lower Elkhorn NRD office at 402-371-7313.



Phase II Annual Reports Due December 31 for Growers in Both Phase II and Phase III Areas



The deadline for the 2020 Phase II Annual Reports is December 31, 2020. If you operate in a Phase II or Phase III area you are required to submit a Phase II report for each field going into corn, larger than 40 acres with more than 50 pounds per acre of actual nitrogen fertilizer applied. A mandatory two foot deep soil sampling analysis is required for the Phase II report at the end of the 2020 growing season to be submitted to UENRD.

For more information on Phase II Annual Reports or Nitrogen Certification visit the UENRD website at <https://www.uenrd.org/> or contact the UENRD office at 402-336-3867. Phase II reports can be filled out on-line; or, filled out, printed and returned to the UENRD office. Both versions of the Phase II form are available on the UENRD website. In addition to the continuation of the phase I and II requirements, phase III includes a random soil sampling conducted by the UENRD. Those selected for soil sampling for fall 2020 have already be selected and notified. Soil sampling has begun as producers get their fields harvested.

UENRD Static Water Level Comparisons

| Subdistrict | 2019 Historic Well Average Depth (ft) | 2020 Historic Well Average Depth (ft) | Change in Feet | Change in Inches | Change from 2019 |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| NW Holt | 16.43 ft | 14.13 ft | ↑ 2.21 ft | ↑ 26.52" | Increase |
| SW Holt | 10.13 ft | 8.95 ft | ↑ 1.18 ft | ↑ 14.16" | Increase |
| E Holt | 23.82 ft | 22.61 ft | ↑ 1.21ft | ↑14.52" | Increase |
| N Antelope | 55.74 ft | 55.21 ft | ↑ 0.53 ft | ↑ 6.36" | Increase |
| C Antelope | 84.22 ft | 82.85 ft | ↑ 1.37 ft | ↑ 16.44" | Increase |
| S Antelope | 55.77 ft | 54.55 ft | ↑ 1.22 ft | ↑ 14.64" | Increase |

| Subdistrict | 2019 Average Depth to Groundwater | 2020 Average Depth to Groundwater | 2019 to 2020 Change in Inches | 20 Year Trend |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| NW Holt & Rock | 16.34 ft | 14.13 ft | ↑ 26.52" | Increase by 1 1/2 inches per year |
| SW Holt & Rock | 10.13 ft | 8.95 ft | ↑ 14.16" | Increase by 1 1/2 inches per year |
| E Holt & Wheeler | 23.82 ft | 22.61 ft | ↑14.52" | Increase by 3 inches per year |
| N Antelope | 55.74 ft | 55.21 ft | ↑ 6.36" | Increase by 1 1/2 inches per year |
| C Antelope | 84.22 ft | 82.85 ft | ↑16.44" | Increase by 1 1/4 inches per year |
| S Antelope | 55.77 ft | 54.55 ft | ↑14.64" | Increase by 6 1/4 inches per year |

Upper Elkhorn Natural Resources District Board of Directors

| | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Roy Stewart | Subdistrict 1 ~ Newport | (402) 244-5360 |
| Jim Keller | Subdistrict 1 ~ Newport | (402) 244-5448 |
| Curtis Gotschall | Subdistrict 2 ~ Stuart | (402) 925-2504 |
| John Vogel | Subdistrict 2 ~ Atkinson | (402) 925-5312 |
| Gene Kelly | Subdistrict 3 ~ O'Neill | (402) 336-3681 |
| Marv Fritz | Subdistrict 3 ~ O'Neill | (402) 340-0747 |
| Gary Bartak | Subdistrict 4 ~ Ewing | (402) 485-2662 |
| Chip Whitaker | Subdistrict 4 ~ Chambers | (402) 482-5665 |
| Mark Carpenter | Subdistrict 5 ~ Creighton | (402) 358-5470 |
| Kevin Blair | Subdistrict 5 ~ Brunswick | (402) 358-5430 |
| Ted Hughes | Subdistrict 6 ~ Neligh | (402) 887-4942 |
| Aaron Rice | Subdistrict 6 ~ Neligh | (402) 929-0470 |
| Keith Heithoff | Subdistrict 7 ~ Elgin | (402) 843-6499 |
| Michael Moser | Subdistrict 7 ~ Elgin | (402) 649-0391 |
| Chris Dierks | At-Large ~ Ewing | (402) 485-2618 |

**UENRD Board Meetings are held the 4th
Monday of every month.**

**April through October at 7:00 P.M. and November through
March at 2:30 P.M.**

UENRD Staff

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Dennis Schueth | General Manager e-mail: dschueth@uenrd.org |
| Joslynn VanDerslice | Water Resources Manager e-mail: jvanderslice@uenrd.org |
| Aron Lewis | Forestry, Wildlife & Resource Coordinator e-mail: alewis@uenrd.org |
| Kelly Kloppenborg | Water Resources Technician e-mail: kloppenborg@uenrd.org |
| Wayne Frederick | Water Resources Technician e-mail: wffrederick@uenrd.org |
| Andrea Fisher | Administrative Assistant e-mail: afisher@uenrd.org |
| Beth Walsh | Information & Education/Chemigation Coordinator e-mail: bwalsh@uenrd.org |
| Brett Sholes | Agronomy Resource Technician e-mail: bsholes@uenrd.org |
| Connor Baldwin | Bazile Management Project Coordinator e-mail: cbaldwin@lenrd.org |
| Caitlin Smith | NRCS Clerk, Neligh |
| Mary Zakrzewski | NRCS Clerk, O'Neill |

UENRD Static Water Level Update

Spring static water levels were collected on 360 wells in March of 2020. The results for 2020, as well as the last 20 years (2001 – 2020), are provided. Average depths are derived from 104 Historic Wells throughout the District. In 2015, 199 New Irrigation Wells were added to our static groundwater monitoring program. The District also maintains 59 dedicated Monitoring Wells.

Upper Elkhorn NRD is divided into six subdistricts: Northwestern Holt and Rock, Southwestern Holt and Rock, Eastern Holt & Wheeler, Northern Antelope, Central Antelope, and Southern Antelope. Every subdistrict increased from 2019 levels. The water level in all six subdistricts was increasing. The 2020 spring static water level average in each subdistrict is the highest water level in every subdistrict since the NRD began collecting data.

